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‘Safeguard health care access in US territories’ PAGE 5

Hafa Adai!

75¢

Saipan Tribune

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Vaccinations expanded to all

By JUSTINE NAUTA
justine_nauta@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

» One more person tests positive

Starting Monday, COVID-19 vaccinations in the CNMI will be expanded to those who are 16 years old and older—essentially opening the vaccination process to almost the entire CNMI community, except for children.

This comes as the CNMI saw another case of COVID-19 yesterday, raising the CNMI’s cumulative total to 157. The individual was identified through expanded contact tracing connected to several individuals who have earlier tested positive for COVID-19.

According to a Commonwealth Healthcare Corp. statement, the individual is asymptomatic, was con-

See VACCINATIONS on Page 4

AT A GLANCE

As of 7pm, March 18, 2021

GUAM	OLD	NEW	TOTAL
Positive	7,776	4	7,780
Recovered	7,618	0	7,618
Active	24	4	28
Deaths	134	0	134
Cumulative Number of Persons Tested			136,135

SAIPAN	OLD	NEW	TOTAL
Positive	156	1	157
Traced via Travel Screening	121	0	121
Traced via Community Screening	35	1	35
Deaths	2	0	2
Cumulative Number of Persons Tested			26,131*
Days since last community transmission			0

VACCINATIONS IN THE CNMI

Saipan:	Tinian:	Rota:
Dose 1: 11,956	Dose 1: 743	Dose 1: 843
Dose 2: 9,090	Dose 2: 268	Dose 2: 357

*Total count includes the number of persons tested on Saipan, Tinian, and Rota. With guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, CHCC has opted not to report active and recovered cases.

Source: Joint Information Center - Guam, Commonwealth Healthcare Corp.

COMMUNITY VULNERABILITY

LEGEND:
- **Red:** Least safe
- **Orange**
- **Yellow**
- **Blue**
- **Green:** Safest

Source: Office of the Governor

$38.6M OK’d to rebuild NMC

File photo shows Gov. Ralph DLG Torres, in orange shirt, leading other officials in a tour of the damage that the Northern Marianas College sustained after Super Typhoon Yutu hit Saipan and Tinian in October 2018.
CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

The Federal Emergency Management Agency has officially awarded over $38.6 million for the rebuilding of Northern Marianas College due to damage it sustained from Super Typhoon Yutu.

The funding covers the NMC As Terlaje’s campus’ Buildings A to W, the NMC Gymnasium, campus-wide exterior components, emergency protective measures, and other contents, as well as buildings on the NMC Tin-

See $38.6M on Page 4

Taiwan, Palau to open travel bubble next month

TAIPEI, Taiwan (AP)—Taiwan and the Pacific nation of Palau will launch a travel bubble next month, allowing people to travel between the islands without a COVID-19 quarantine.

Palau is one of Taiwan’s remaining diplomatic allies after China lured other countries to deny recognition of the self-governed island it considers part of its own territory.

The travel bubble will be

See TAIWAN on Page 4

Together, we can take control of our economic future

TOGETHER, WE CAN

By MIKE SABLAN
Special to the Saipan Tribune

Mike Sablan is a member of the Governor’s Council of Economic Advisers.

One year ago, no one could have imagined the magnitude of the economic devastation that the COVID-19 pandemic would cause, and the extent of its disruptive impact to our way of life. Nor could anyone have imagined how protracted this crisis would be. The newly reported COVID-19 cases this past week remind us that the virus’ continuing threat remains in our community and that we all need to continue to be vigilant.

GOVERNOR’S COUNCIL OF ECONOMIC ADVISERS
Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands

See TOGETHER on Page 4

INSIDE

LOCAL
Today’s Yeh-Yeh series focuses on Don Farrell and his passion to teach Tinian to the world.

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NATION
A white gunman is charged with killing eight people at three Atlanta-area massage parlors.

PAGE 16

OFF THE WALL
Cafes across several Gulf Arab states started selling coffee and other cold drinks in baby bottles.

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SCAN ME WITH A COMPATIBLE QR READER TO KEEP UPDATED ON ALL THE LATEST NEWS.

GOT A NEWS TIP? TEL: 235-6397 / 235-2440 FAX: 235-3740 EMAIL: editor@saipantribune.com

Local

Bill that will establish CEDA placed on calendar for action

The House of Representatives has agreed to withdraw from the Committee on Commerce and Tourism and place on calendar for action at the next session a bill that will establish the Commonwealth Economic Development Authority.

At Tuesday's House's session, floor leader Rep. Ralph N. Yumul (R-Saipan) said they have come to a compromise and that he has placed House Bill 22-21 on that day's calendar for action at the next session. There was no immediate word on when the next session will be.

Rep. Christina E. Sablan (D-Saipan) said she would like to make sure that the House members will be able to see the supporting document that the bill's author, Rep. Angel A. Demapan (R-Saipan), said he has. That document refers to the Saipan Chamber of Commerce's letter that had expressed support for Demapan's bill.

"And so I do look forward to learning more about the merits of the bill," she said.

Demapan said the Governor's Council of Economic Advisers had a presentation to the House last Feb. 26, and one of the recommendations was the transformation of the Commonwealth Development Authority into the Commonwealth Economic Development Authority.

Demapan said he had already introduced House Bill 22-21 prior to that presentation and that the economic council since then has followed up with his office on the status of the bill, which has been referred to the House Committee on Commerce and Tourism.

Demapan said 30 minutes before the session that day, Tuesday, the Saipan Chamber of Commerce, transmitted to his office its letter of support to the bill.

He said the Saipan Chamber of Commerce highlighted that the bill is truly a revenue generating bill and it will be providing the new tools and authority to what would become CEDA and realize new diversified investments in the CNMI.

The lawmaker said CDA, the entity that will be impacted through the transformation also supports this bill.

He said the bill is short and straightforward, but impactful in terms of revenue generation. ***(Ferdie De La Torre)***

NEW BEAUTY QUEEN

Newly-crowned Miss Marianas 2021 Savannah Lyn Relox Delos Santos poses for a photograph with Keith Stewart, president of Pacific Rim, which is a title sponsor of Stellar Marianas, the group that organizes the annual pageant.

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‘Divert delay disappointing but US govt’s challenges are clear’

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Gov. Ralph DLG Torres is disappointed with the delay in the U.S. Air Force’s divert facility construction project on Tinian, but said he understands the challenges the U.S. government is going through, especially when it comes to the lack of construction workers.

» Torres says CNMI needs enough construction workers due to many road, school projects

In an interview with reporters last Friday at the Office of the Governor’s conference room, Torres said the U.S. government has the same challenges regarding the divert airfield project that the CNMI is going through in terms of the availability of available labor.

The governor said he just want to make sure that the divert airfield project is still a U.S. government priority even if it extends or delays it for one year.

“As far as I know, it’s delayed but is still a priority, a top priority,” he said, adding he is hoping the U.S. government would continue to move forward with the project and expedite it even early next year.

Commonwealth Ports Authority board chair Kimberlyn King-Hinds recently confirmed that the initial bids for the divert facility construction project exceeded the U.S. government’s estimate and procurement level, which means the construction project will not likely begin until 2022.

King-Hinds said the resulting delay is not surprising, given that they warned the U.S. Department of Defense early on in their discussions about the challenges regarding limited housing on Tinian and the need to import labor, among many other issues that will impact the cost of construction because of the island’s location and certain labor policies.

CPA, the CNMI government, and the U.S. Department of Defense signed a 40-year lease agreement for the project in May 2019. In fact, CPA has already received the lump-sum payment of $21.9 million for the lease. The deal will allow the Air Force to build an alternative landing site for its planes—a divert airfield—on Tinian in case the Anderson Air Force Base in Guam is inaccessible due to war or calamities.

Torres said even the CNMI has many challenges in getting enough manpower for a lot of construction projects.

“We’re building Route 35, the Bird Island inner-island connection, we have the Airport Road, Obyan Road, the Industry Road, Beach Road. So just that alone…” said Torres, adding that they have also Public School System’s building of campuses and the Northern Marianas College.

“There’s a lot of infrastructure that needs to be built. I hope that by the time [we start these projects] we will have construction workers to address our immediate recovery plan,” the governor said.

Trash bins donated to MHS

By NEIL FAMA
neil_fama@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The Saipan Fil-American Lions Club and Saipan Mighty Dolphins Leo Club donated eight trash bins to Marianas High School last March 9.

According to MHS principal Jonathan Aguon, the trash bin donation is timely because trash is becoming a challenge once more as the school starts going back to in-person classes.

MHS vice principal Romolo Orsini said this is the second time the Saipan Fil-American Lions has donated to the school, which is why MHS is truly grateful.

The school presented the clubs’ officers with certificates of appreciation during the turnover of the trash bins. The Lion Club was headed by president Eden Mercado, first vice president Socorro Huliganga, club secretary Mario Mayuga, club service chair Marilyn Quebral, and members Leonila Mendoza, Jean Pumatong, Zaldy Quebral and Leo members Angel Nabaunag and Bea Mendoza.

“I am so grateful to our fellow Lions who helped in preparing the drums, and for making the donation possible. It will alleviate the trash in the campus, and it will help keep the biggest school on Saipan clean and beautiful,” said Mercado.

If you have a passion for serving the community and want to join Lions Club, contact Mercado at 788-2416 or Mayuga at 285-1021. To learn more about the organization, visit the website www.lionsclubs.org.

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FIRST COMMERCIAL MARIJUANA PRODUCER LICENSEE

Victor Cabrera, owner of T-Marianas, shows his commercial marijuana producer Class 1 license that the CNMI Cannabis Commission issued last Friday during a press conference in the governor's conference room. Also in the photo from left are CCC board chair Nadine Deleon Guerrero, Gov. Ralph DLG Torres, CCC board secretary Journie Hofschneider, CCC board vice chair Matthew Deleon Guerrero, and acting CCC managing director Janina Maratita. FERDIE DE LA TORRE

$38.6M

From Page 1

ian campus.

"NMC was among the hardest hit areas by Super Typhoon Yutu, and we have worked extremely hard in our planning and application for funding since the beginning of the recovery," said Gov. Ralph DLG Torres. "With this latest funding approval, we can continue the work of rebuilding our college so that our Proa family and future students can have a great place to learn, work, and grow. We look forward to building new school buildings, repair damaged facilities, and create a college campus that will have the potential to be one of the best in the Pacific."

The project worksheets approved by FEMA include construction and replacement of buildings, classrooms, and facilities on the NMC As Terlaje campus on Saipan and the NMC campus on Tinian.

"Our administration's partnership with FEMA is an important one, and it shows what can be accomplished when we work together for our people. …This is great news for the Commonwealth, and together, we will continue our work in building a stronger NMC and a stronger Marianas," said Torres.

Among the many persons he thanked for this grant award were FEMA Region IX administrator Robert J. Fenton Jr., who is also currently serving as the senior official performing the duties of the FEMA administrator in Washington, D.C.; Virginia Villagomez, governor's authorized representative to FEMA for Super Typhoon Yutu; the CNMI Public Assistance team led by Patrick Guerrero, NMC board of regents chair Charles Cepeda, and interim president Frankie Eliptico "for their work with our administration to push these projects forward."

Eliptico said the funds from FEMA's Public Assistance program will help rebuild the campus and give the college an opportunity to build brand new facilities that are modern, typhoon-resilient, technologically advanced, and energy-efficient.

Villagomez said the CNMI will continue its work on typhoon-related recovery. "This is certainly welcoming news for NMC and for the CNMI. The Torres-Palacios administration will continue its commitment to rebuild homes, schools, and public facilities, while prioritizing mitigation projects that will protect life and property in our community thus strengthen and improve our mitigation efforts throughout the Commonwealth. We are grateful for all the efforts that FEMA has driven to secure this approval and as partners, we look forward to successfully completing projects benefiting our community," said Villagomez. ***(PR)***

VACCINATIONS

From Page 1

firmed positive on Wednesday, and is already in quarantine. All positive cases and close contacts have been safely isolated from the community.

Separately, according to CHCC chief executive officer Esther Muña yesterday, the COVID-19 vaccine will be made available for ages 16 years old and older on Saipan this Monday, while the community-based testing will resume at the same time.

On Rota, vaccinations will start on Sunday, March 21, for those who are 18 years and older. On Tinian, vaccinations will start on March 26 for those who are 18 years and older.

When asked if CHCC has enough vaccines on hand, Muña said there is enough supply of vaccines "before the next shipment comes in." There was no immediate word on when the next shipments of vaccines are expected.

The Federal Drug Administration gave the Moderna Inc. vaccine Emergency Use Authorization for ages 18 and older, and the Pfizer/BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine for those who are 16 and older. This is why CHCC can only offer the Moderna vaccine on Rota and Tinian since this vaccine can be readily transported using conventional storage equipment, unlike the Pfizer vaccine that requires special equipment for ultra-cold storage. On Saipan, the Pfizer vaccine will be offered to those 16 years old and older.

As for the community-based testing, Muña said it will be offered at the Alternate Care Site at Kanoa Resort in Susupe.

Testing experts from South Korea are expected to come in today to help with the CBT. The CNMI obtained its COVID-19 test kits from South Korea last year and the company that provided the kits also sent a team last time to carry out equipment regulation and test quality assurance and quality control. The same help will be provided for the CNMI as it moves forward with the CBT next week since CHCC already has many priorities with the vaccines and running the hospital.

Muña did not clarify how the community can register for the CBT.

To register for the vaccination, go online at www.vaccinatecnmi.com. You may also register over the phone by calling (670) 682-5E10111(7468). On Saipan, on-site registration is open for persons 55 years and older.

TOGETHER

From Page 1

CHCC's and the COVID-19 Task Force's quick action on the recent cases showcased our much-improved ability as a community to take better control of the threat, with experience, resources, and professional competencies to respond promptly.

It is critical that we also work toward regaining control of our economic future. Last week I wrote of the Governor's Council of Economic Advisors' basic mission: to chart an economic roadmap out of these unprecedented times. We've talked to experienced leaders in the public and private sectors, financial experts, health care professionals, and people representing a good cross-section of the community to identify strategic moves that would create the greatest impact in the next few years and beyond. The dialogues have ignited a sense of shared responsibility and resolve, that transformational changes are needed to create a more robust and resilient economy post-COVID.

The work from the past year culminated in our Annual Report, a plan that outlines 13 key economic initiatives. GCEA welcomes further discussion on these as our work continues and new stakeholders join the call to help us craft our recovery roadmap.

Of the 13 initial recommendations, two focus on opportunities for economic growth and new investment that can help fast-track our recovery. The proposal to restructure the Commonwealth Development Authority into the Commonwealth Economic Development Authority would refocus the agency's priority to taking the lead on economic development promotional efforts. The proposal includes providing CEDA the needed authority, resources and tools to plan for, coordinate, and implement efforts to cultivate a stronger economic environment for investors. For decades, promotion of the CNMI as a viable destination for quality investment opportunities—those that create meaningful jobs, contribute significantly to our tax base, complement our attraction as a tourist destination, and enhance the quality of life for our residents—has been largely dispersed among various agencies. The CDA, Marianas Visitors Authority, Commonwealth Ports Authority, Department of Public Lands, mayor's offices, the Legislature, and the Governor's Office have done their own promotion over the years through various trade missions, investment conferences, and others. While well-intentioned, this uncoordinated approach has not worked well for us. We are pleased to learn that a CEDA bill we helped to draft has been introduced in the House and Senate and we look forward to further deliberation on it.

The GCEA has also recommended revisions to the Investment Incentive Act of 2000, better known as the Qualifying Certificate program, to help boost our efforts to attract new industry and establish the CNMI as a more competitive investment destination. We are in discussions with the Legislature and key stakeholders on this initiative and hope to report progress in the next few weeks.

Other GCEA recommendations call for a tourism revitalization plan, environmental protection, efficiency in the delivery of basic services, cultural preservation, transformation of local sites and facilities, and much-needed road improvements. We support revisiting the 2015 Integrated Resource Plan and one day having universal garbage collection CNMI-wide.

More recommendations are expected as the GCEA continues to reach out in the community to stir up discussions and spur new ideas. We welcome you to download the annual report from the GCEA's Facebook page to get a deeper understanding of what we are aiming to accomplish with your help. TOGETHER, WE CAN take control of our economic future.

TAIWAN

From Page 1

Taiwan's first after it largely closed to foreign travel in one of the world's most successful campaigns against the coronavirus.

Palau for its part has had zero cases of COVID-19, Chen Shih-chung, the head of Taiwan's Central Epidemic Command Center, said at a news conference announcing the bubble Wednesday.

Travelers must be in group tours and must meet certain health conditions but will not have to quarantine, according to Chen.

Travelers must have not been outside borders in six months, have no history of being asked to quarantine in the last two months and have not been infected with the coronavirus in the last three months, Chen said. They must take a virus test before leaving Taiwan and upon returning and must monitor their health, especially in the first five days upon their return.

The bubble will start with two flights per week between the two islands, with the first flight scheduled on April 1.

Taiwan has recorded about 990 cases of coronavirus infection, with 10 deaths from COVID-19. The island took strict measures quickly after the first cases were detected in the central Chinese city of Wuhan in December 2019. It has strict border measure controls with a mandatory two-week quarantine for all travelers and has been mostly shut to foreign travelers unless they have work or live in Taiwan.

Much of the existing tourism from Palau to Taiwan is medical tourism, and Taiwan is a supplier of virus tests and other medical supplies.

Palau's current travel policy is for new arrivals to quarantine for 14 days if their point of origin is a high-risk location, while a briefer quarantine is possible for people who traveled from places without ongoing community transmission of the virus.

Palau's President Surangel Whipps Jr. will come to Taiwan on March 28 on an official visit to promote the island's tourism industry, although it will not be a formal state visit, said Taiwan's Foreign Minister Joseph Wu.

The islands have had a diplomatic relationship since 1999.

‘Safeguard health care access in US territories

WASHINGTON, D.C.— Equally American issued the following statement yesterday after testifying before the House Energy and Commerce Subcommittee on Health on protecting access to health care in U.S. territories:

“Protecting access to health care in the territories is a matter of basic fairness,” said Neil Weare, president and founder of Equally American, a nonpartisan public interest organization that works to advance equality and voting rights in U.S. territories. “For example, citizens in U.S. territories have historically received less Medicaid funding than citizens in states with similar per-capita incomes. On top of that, Medicaid funding for the territories has long been arbitrarily capped well below the territories’ actual needs, which creates uncertainty, instability, and vulnerability that discourages providers in the territories from serving low-income patients, which has life and death consequences.

“Protecting access to health care in the territories is also a matter of racial equity. Ninety-eight percent of Americans living in the territories identify as racial or ethnic minorities, or indigenous peoples,” Weare noted. “These communities have historically faced impediments to equitable access to health care.

“More importantly, protecting access to health care in the territories is crucial to avoid a looming crisis. Favorable Medicaid treatment for territorial residents that was initially enacted as temporary will soon end unless Congress acts. Without congressional action, the territories will fall off a Medicaid ‘cliff,’ meaning that Medicaid funding will run out part way through the year, jeopardizing lives.

“To address structural vulnerabilities for the territories, Equally American is calling on Congress to eliminate Medicaid’s general funding lamination for the territories so that every American, no matter where they live, can have equal access to health care services.” ***(PR)***

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2021 Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month

Get Involved & Be Part of The Change

“Training & Technical Support for Families of Children who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing in the CNMI”

TINIAN: MARCH 13 2021
JC CAFE 8:00 AM - 2:30 PM

TIME	Presentation
08:00 AM – 08:30 AM	*Registration*
08:30 AM – 08:35 AM	*Welcoming Remarks* John Cabrera *Program Aide, NMPASI*
08:35 AM – 09:35 AM	*Promoting Health for Children and Youth with Developmental Disabilities* Rachael Haynes, DNP -PNP-PC *Commonwealth HealthCare Corporation, Children’s Clinic*
09:35 AM – 09:45 AM	*Tinian/ Rota: Commonwealth Office of Transit Authority Updates* Saipan: Break
09:45 AM – 10:20 AM	*Basic American Sign Language for Beginners* Dr. Kiriko Takahashi *Center on Disability Studies University of Hawaii*
10:20 AM – 10:45 AM	*Individualized Family Service Plan 101* Robin Palacios, MA. Sp Ed. *Director, Early Intervention Program*
10:45 AM – 11:00 AM	*Individualized Education Plan 101* Donna M. Flores, M.S. *Director, Special Education Program*
11:00 AM – 12:00 PM	*Lunch Break*

SAIPAN: MARCH 20, 2021
HYATT REGENCY 8:00 AM - 2:30 PM

ROTA: MARCH 27, 2021
AS PARIS 8:00 AM - 2:30 PM

TIME	Presentation
12:00 PM – 12:20 PM	*Helpful Apps for Individuals who are Deaf & Hard of Hearing & Their Families* Carla D. Coldeen, M.Ed., ATP *Service Provider and Owner, Assistive Technology Professional & Consulting Services*
12:20 PM – 01:20 PM	*Parenting Strategies* Coach Tai D. Doram *Certified Cognitive Behavior Consultant* *Behavior Specialist, CNMI Public School System*
01:20 PM – 01:30 PM	*Energizer*
01:30 PM – 01:50 PM	*Testimonials from the Deaf/ Hard of Hearing Community*
01:50 PM – 02:00 PM	*Services for Deaf/ Hard of Hearing Community* Tiava To'omata/ Samuel Santos *Planner/ Pre-ETS Coordinator, Office of Vocational Rehabilitation*
02:00 PM – 02:10 PM	*Programs & Services* *Frances A. Torres* *Federal Program Coordinator, Workforce Investment Agency*
02:10 PM – 02:30 PM	*CIRCLES* *Congresswoman Leila Staffler*
	Closing Remarks

Seating is Limited! Registration forms are available at NMPASIF or
more information please contact John Cabrera at (670) 235-7273/4 or email jcabrera@nmpasi.org

"This program was supported by a grant from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services awarded to the Commonwealth Healthcare Corporation (CHCC), and sub-granted by the CHCC. Points of view or opinions contained within this document are those of the author and do not necessarily represent the official position or policies of the U.S Department of Health and Human Services, or CHCC."

OPA affirms rejection of contractor's protest

The Office of the Public Auditor has denied the appeal of a contractor who had protested the decision of Procurement & Supply to award the contract to build a Commonwealth Office of Transit Authority to another company despite the contractor having the lowest bid.

In its decision last March 12, OPA turned down the appeal of Hong Ye Rental & Construction Ltd. against the Procurement & Supply director's decision to deny its protest over the Department of Public Works' awarding of the COTA project to the second lower bidder, RNV Construction.

OPA legal counsel Joseph J. Przyuski ruled that Hong Ye's bid's conflicting certifications of compliance and non-compliance renders it non-responsive. Public Auditor Kina B. Peter concurred with Przyuski's decision.

The contract is for the construction of the federally-funded COTA Administrative and Maintenance Facility. According to OPA, Hong Ye's bid was lowest at $2,861,548. The second lowest bidder was RNV Construction. The third bidder was HBR International Inc.

COTA later determined the Hong Ye proposal, though lowest on the project, failed to meet the requirements of the Federal Transit Administration under the Buy America Act regulations. That's how the contract went to RNV Construction. Hong Ye only learned about this when the company's president, Michael Sheu, received an email invitation for the groundbreaking of the COTA project and subsequently lodged a protest with the Procurement & Supply director.

Hong Ye, through counsel, argued that that award of the contract to RNV violated the CNMI procurement regulations because Hong Ye was not promptly notified of the award to RNV and because Yong Ye was the lowest responsive bidder.

On Oct. 7, 2020, the Procurement & Supply director denied Hong Ye's protest. The director concluded that the protest must be denied because their bid, while the lowest, was not responsive because it included ambiguous contradictory certifications of compliance and non-compliance with the Buy America Certification and therefore failed to "represent an unequivocal offer to perform" and accept all "material terms and conditions."

Hong Ye then appealed to OPA. ***(Ferdie de la Torre)***

Scheduled power outage on March 23 and 25

The Commonwealth Utilities Corp. would like to inform the public that there will be scheduled power service interruptions on March 23 and 25, 2021 for portions of San Vicente in order for CUC linemen to safely replace rotted and leaning primary power poles to concrete poles and to install an anchor for the leaning power pole within aforementioned affected areas.

See additional information below:

Tuesday, March 23, 2021- 8:30am to 2:30pm

■ Outage Type: Sectionalized Interruption on the Kiya 1 Circuit

■ Project Location: Isa Drive in San Vicente

■ Power Service Areas Affected: San Vicente (Kahida Pl., Laulau Bay Drive, Achon Ln., Railroad Dr., Sinagu Ln., Tininu P1., Galak Dr., Makpong Pl., Pacific Heights P1., Boya Pl., Mulberry Ln., Lantana P1., Palai Way, Mapga Ln., Langit Ln., Berbena Dr., Pakko Ln., Golondrina Dr., & Nifen Ln.)

■ Water Well Affected: None

■ Wastewater Lift Station Affected: None

Thursday, March 25, 2021- 8:30am to 12:30pm

■ Outage Type: Sectionalized Interruption on the Kiya 1 Circuit

■ Project Location: Gulek Lane in San Vicente

■ Power Service Areas Affected: Gulek Lane in San Vicente

■ Water Well Affected: None

■ Wastewater Lift Station Affected: None

For more information, contact the CUC Customer Hotline (236-4333). ***(PR)***

Emergency water outage in parts of CK, Kannat Tabla, Chalan Kiya

The Commonwealth Utilities Corp. would like to inform the public that there are two emergency water service interruptions for customers in the following areas:

Wednesday, March 17, 2021 from 9:30am to Thursday, March 18, 2021 4:30pm

■ Water service areas affected: Chalan Kanoa, Guillermo Avenue and Hilarion Avenue (behind the Galaxy II Snackbar).

■ Purpose of the water outage: Isolation of a 6-inch waterline break on Guillermo Avenue for repair.

Friday, March 19, 2021, from 8:30am to 4:30pm

■ Water service areas affected: A portion of Kannat Tabla Road from the entrance to CMS Quarry north towards the shooting range and customers in the Chalan Kiya area.

■ Purpose of the water outage: Isolation of the 8-inch waterline for two (2) service lateral repairs located near Kannat Gardens and the shooting range area.

CUC urges customers in these areas to practice water conservation and to contact the CUC Customer Call Center to report any leaks for repairs. For the safety of the men and women at the jobsite, motorists are advised to exercise caution or take alternative routes as a section of the roadways will be closed for repairs.

For more information, contact the CUC Hotline (236-4333) or monitor our Facebook page for the latest updates (https://www.facebook.com/CommonwealthUtilitiesCorporation/). ***(PR)***

Scheduled power service interruption today

There will be a scheduled power service interruption today, March 19, 2021, from 8:30am to 12:30pm for customers on Palu Lane in San Vicente. This will allow linemen of the Commonwealth Utilities Corp. to safely replace a rotted primary power pole and resag low primary and secondary lines within the affected area. See additional information below:

Friday, March 19, 2021- 8:30am to 12:30pm

■ Outage Type: Sectionalized Interruption on the Kiya 1 Circuit

■ Project Location: Palu Lane in San Vicente

■ Power Service Areas Affected: Palu Lane in San Vicente

■ Water Well Affected: None

■ Wastewater Lift Station Affected: None

For more information, contact the CUC Customer Hotline (236-4333) or monitor our Facebook page for the latest updates (https://www.facebook.com/CommonwealthUtilitiesCorporation/). ***(PR)***

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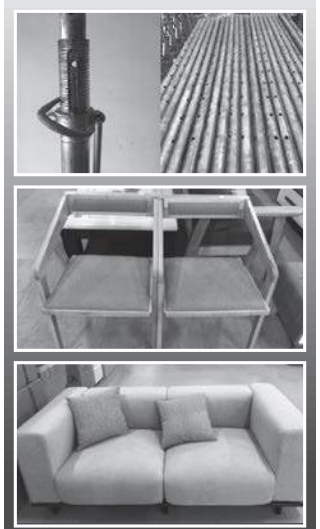
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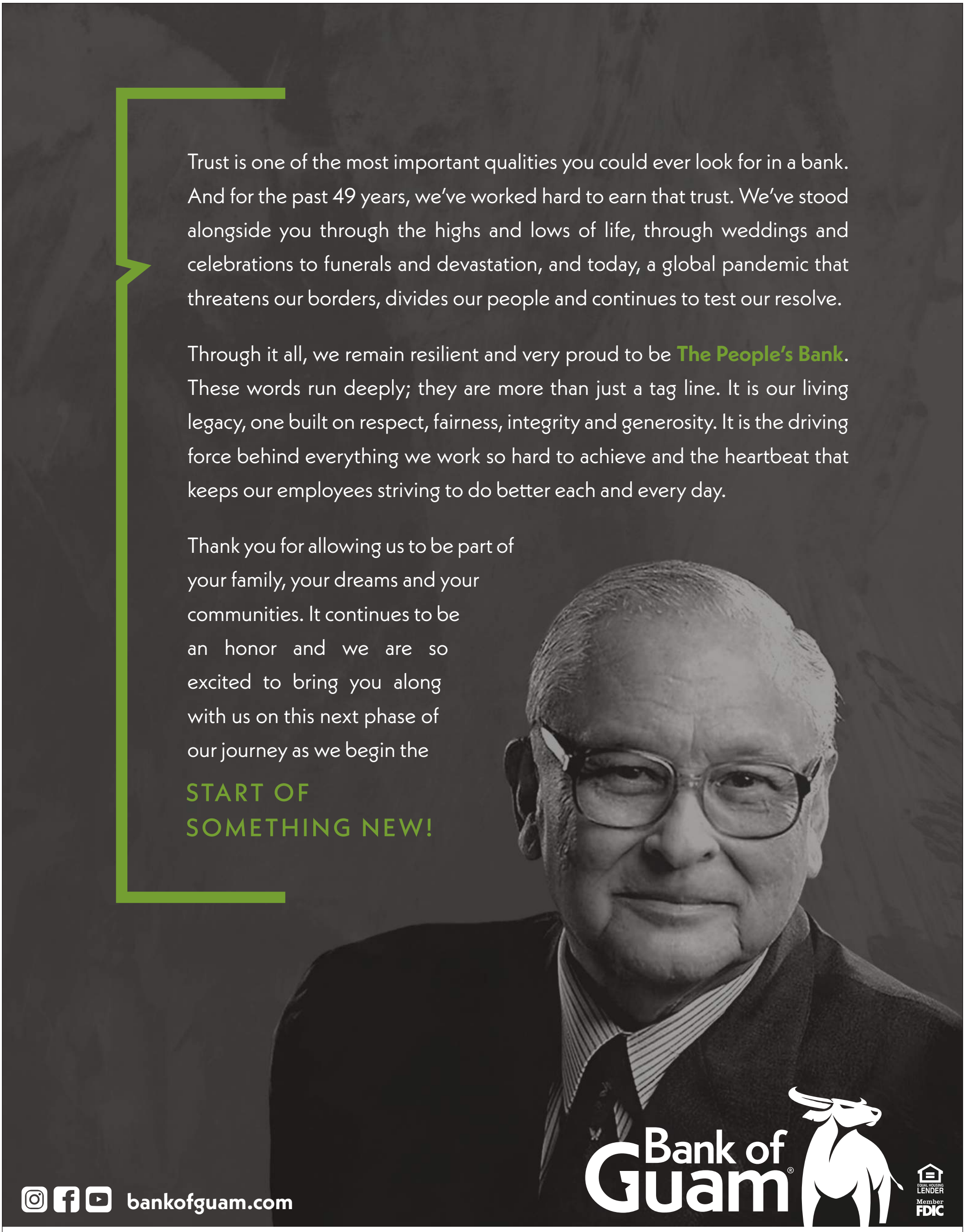

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CHILD CARE AND DEVELOPMENT FUND (CCDF) PROGRAM
2021 SUMMER PROGRAM GRANT

ANNOUNCEMENT

The Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF) Program announces an opportunity for non-profit, community-based organizations to participate in a Summer Program Grant for Summer 2021. This grant is open to organizations that offer Summer Programs to all school-aged children between the ages 6 to 12 years old. For this grant, a total of six (6) awards will be provided, 4 awards for Saipan, 1 for Rota, and 1 for Tinian. CCDF has the right to award smaller grant awards as appropriate. CCDF Summer Program Grant Application Packets maybe picked up at the Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF) Program Office, Building No. 1347 Ascension Court, Capitol Hill, Saipan, MP 96950

Interested applicants should submit one (1) original and three (3) copies of the completed application and requirements, sealed and marked: CCDF Summer Program Grant Application 2021. Attention: Maribel Loste, CCDF Administrator.

All applications must be stamped received no later than April 15, 2020 4:00p.m. Incomplete applications will not be accepted and will be returned.

CCDF will only accept written inquiries regarding this grant opportunity and should be addressed to Maribel Loste, CCDF Administrator on or before 4:00p.m. on March 22, 2021. Inquires maybe sent via:

1. Hard copy and submitted to the CCDF Office Bldg. No. 1347 Ascension Court Capitol Hill or
2. Email at mloste.cnmiccdf@gmail.com with the subject: **CCDF 2021 Summer Program**

All inquiries made after March 22, 2021 will not be entertained.

/s/ Maribel Loste
CCDF Administrator

/s/ Joseph P. Deleon Guerrero
DCCA Secretary

MCS senior is nat'l scholarships bet

Mount Carmel School senior Victoria Santos has earned a slot as a candidate for the United States Presidential Scholars Program and is a finalist for the National Merit Scholarship Program.

Santos

The United States Presidential Scholars Program was established in 1964 and is meant to recognize the accomplishments of some of our nation's most distinguished graduating seniors. Scholars are chosen based on their leadership and service within their school and community. Selected candidates are known to demonstrate exceptional scholarship; visual, creative, and performing arts talent; and accomplishment in career and technical fields.

Students chosen as U.S. Presidential Scholars receive an expense-paid trip to Washington, D. C. and are presented the U.S. Presidential Scholars medallion at a ceremony sponsored by the White House, in commemoration of their achievements.

The National Merit Scholarship program offers a $2500 award for graduating high school seniors who presented high PSAT/NMSQT test scores, a substantial application packet, and who have secured their admission for college. Students in the CNMI must be United States citizens in order to begin the application process.

"I never imagined how far my hard work would take me," said Santos. "I am truly blessed to have as many of the opportunities I have today and the support of my family, friends, and school community. It is truly humbling to earn as many of the achievements I have and I hope one day, I can give back to my community as it has already given so much to me."

Mount Carmel School president Dr. Galvin Deleon Guerrero said, "Victoria Santos is truly one of our brightest and most devoted students who is deserving of every opportunity and accomplishment she's achieved thus far."

Santos will graduate from Mount Carmel School in May 2021 and is preparing to attend Rice University with a full-ride scholarship through the Questbridge Program. ***(PR)***

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ANNOUNCEMENT

The Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF) Program continues to be open to accept applications for Front liners. Front liners are defined as:

1. Front liners/workers assigned to working on Covid-19 activities with direct contact of individuals for example: workers at testing sites, workers at quarantine sites, law enforcement assisting at testing sites;
2. Law enforcement, public safety officers, CNMI Homeland Security employees, emergency medical services working on Covid-19 activities with direct contact of individuals, including all individuals who work and provide medical services at the hospital or private clinics;
3. Retail cashiers, gas attendants, sanitation workers, bank tellers;
4. Child care teachers, caregivers, including employees in the educational sector.

Front liners who may not necessarily meet income guidelines for the family may still qualify. For more information regarding eligibility requirements, please call Genevieve Guerrero, CCDF Eligibility Specialist at 664-2576 or email at dcca.jguerrero@gmail.com or Joella Rosario, CCDF Eligibility Specialist at 664-2575 or email at ccdf.jrosario@gmail.com. You may also want to visit cnmicclp.gov.mp to download the CCDF Waitlist Application Packet.

/s/ Maribel D. Loste
CCDF Administrator

/s/ Joseph P. Deleon Guerrero
DCCA Secretary

30TH ANNIVERSARY
Northern Marianas Humanities Council
Navigating the Human Experience

Board Vacancy Announcement

CNMI residents are invited to express their interest in serving as a Board member for the Northern Marianas Humanities Council (Council). The Council is a non-profit, private corporation affiliated with the National Endowment for the Humanities whose mission is to navigate and explore the human experiences of the indigenous and diverse peoples of the Commonwealth by enriching their lives through research, dialogue, programs, and publications.

The Council's Board is comprised of thirteen volunteer members who serve three-year terms. The Council strives to maintain a board that reflects a broad cross section of our CNMI community. The ideal candidate will have a strong desire to promote the Council's mission, programs, and activities and to actively participate in fundraising activities. Board responsibilities include but are not limited to:

- Attending regular Council meetings four times annually;
- Raising funds for Council programs;
- Recruiting community partners;
- Promoting awareness about the Council's mission and its programs in the community;
- Attending Council programs and activities;
- Participating in working committee meetings;
- Evaluating Council programs and activities;
- Reviewing grant applications;
- Providing input about the humanities from various community members, and
- Attending conferences, workshops and other meetings on behalf of the Council.

Applicants are invited to submit their letters of interest and resumes to **Theresa Arriola, Chair**, Northern Marianas Humanities Council at Post Office Box 506437 Saipan, MP 96950, delivered to the Council's office located in the Springs Plaza Building in Gualo Rai, Saipan, or via email to: info@nmhcouncil.org. Complete submissions must be received by Council staff on or before 4:00 p.m. on Monday, March 22, 2021. For additional information, please contact the Council's Executive Director, Leo Pangelinan, at telephone 235-4785 or visit the Council's website at www.nmhcouncil.org.

Healthy Cooking Demo tomorrow

Join the food experts from Payless SuperFresh and Surf Club for Triple J's Healthy Cooking Demo this Saturday, March 20, at the Sabalu Market in Garapan from 8am to 10am.

Check out the Triple J tent where they will be giving away healthy meal samples using fresh local fruits and vegetables. "We will be promoting healthy meals that are tasty and easy to prepare at home," said a company statement yesterday.

The Healthy Cooking Demo will be featuring the following recipes:

Item 1. **Tri Colored Bean Salad:** This salad is made with tri-colored organic beans and a tasty lime dressing. Super easy and packed with great fresh veggies including fresh local tomatoes. This dish is made with organic beans, low in sodium, and uses heart healthy avocado oil.

Item 2. **Sriracha Shrimp Appetizer:** This simple appetizer is a little sweet and a little spicy. A beautiful marinated shrimp on top of a piece of grilled pineapple gives you flavor without the fat and sodium. Finished with some flavorful local cilantro. This dish is low sodium, uses avocado oil which is low in bad cholesterol (LDL) and high in good cholesterol (HDL).

Item 3. **CAB Sirloin Tip with Tzatziki on a piece of Naan bread:** This is a flavor-packed dish with tons of herbs and simple ingredients. Steak is herbaceous with a zing, mellowed by a cool creamy Tzatziki featuring local cucumber—all delivered on a warm flat bread Naan, the perfect vehicle to hold all of that goodness. This dish uses sirloin tip steak, which is lean cut. The light sour cream base adds creaminess minus the normal fat of regular sour cream, and the use of cucumber and fresh herbs keeps the calories down.

Stay tuned to the Payless SuperFresh social media pages for updates on its next demo. ***(PR)***

The tri-colored bean salad. CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

The sriracha shrimp appetizer. CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

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The Certified Angus Beef sirloin tip with tzatziki on a piece of naan.

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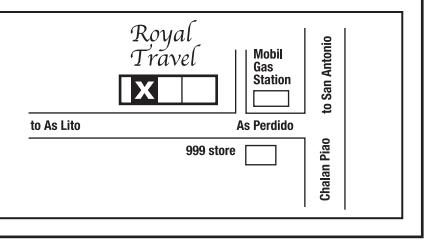

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McDonald's

Celebrating 28 Years of Service to the Marianas

We congratulate McDonald's Saipan and the Ayuyu family on 28 years of high-quality service and dedication to the people of the Marianas.

Armed with a dream and ambition, Joe C. Ayuyu Sr. made his goal a reality by opening Saipan's first McDonald's in Chalan Laulau on March 18, 1993. Since then, Mr. Ayuyu, his wife Marcia, and their children Mable, Joe, Ashley, and Maria, have opened eight restaurants in the Marianas with two on Saipan and six on Guam. In 2016, the Ayuyu family acquired all McDonald's restaurants in Guam, further solidifying itself as a successful local business within our region.

McDonald's Saipan has truly become a model of excellence and quality for the Pacific region. The Ayuyu family continues to innovate through their quality customer service, delicious food, and technological advancement in their restaurants. They have also displayed compassionate generosity through their assistance during natural disasters and by giving back to non-profit organizations and worthy causes that impact the lives of people all over the Marianas.

The Marianas is truly blessed to have a successful locally run business that continues to give so much back to its customers. We wish them more success in the years to come

Si Yu'us Ma'åse' yan Ghilisow!

RALPH DLG. TORRES

ARNOLD I. PALACIOS

Opinion

Hafa Adai!
Saipan Tribune
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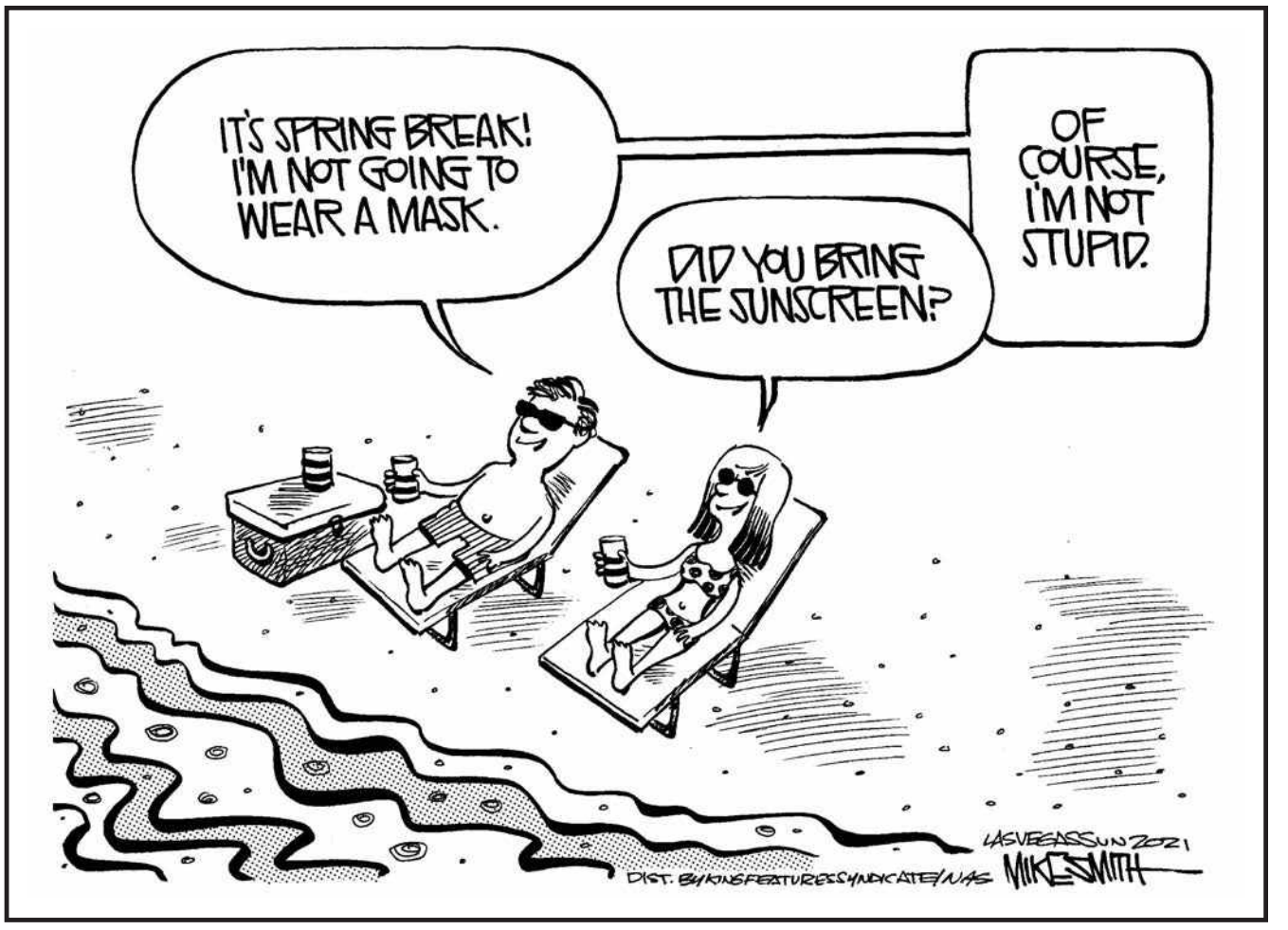
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EDITORIAL

Guns, racism, misogyny and the deadly shootings in Atlanta

It will be a while before we get a full picture of the motives behind the shootings at three spas in the Atlanta area late Tuesday afternoon, which police allege were committed by a 21-year-old white man. But the contours of the violence make one explanation plausible. Among the eight dead were six women of Asian descent, leading the Stop AAPI Hate advocacy group to describe the killings as an "unspeakable tragedy—for the families of the victims first and foremost, but also for the AAPI community—which has been reeling from high levels of racial discrimination."

Police on Wednesday morning said they were still trying to unravel what drove the gunman, but said he may have been propelled by sexual addiction and his desire to, in effect, eliminate temptation. Yet the targeted businesses employed a high number of Asian workers—one spa, in which four women were killed, is named Young's Asian Massage Parlor—so even if the motive sprang from another darkness, the result still left at least six people of Asian descent shot dead.

If it turns out that the spark for this particular mass shooting arose from a tortured mind and libido, Asian Americans still are right to worry about possible connections between the killings and the surge of violence targeting them.

Also worth noting: Police allege that the gunman targeted women (only one of the dead was male) for the "crime" of being the object of his sexual temptation. Ironically, the killings happened a day before the House of Representatives was set to vote—again—to revive the federal Violence Against Women Act.

There's a lot at play here, but more broadly, racial animosity, misogyny and easy access to firearms are a disturbingly routine confluence of three of the ugliest aspects of American society. That the violence in the Atlanta area quickly led minds to presume, rightly or wrongly, that another act of anti-Asian racism had occurred was not at all surprising, given the current backdrop.

As we noted earlier this month, former President Donald Trump's persistent racializing of the origins of the virus that has now killed more than 530,000 people nationwide put a target on the backs of Asian Americans.

Racism, from the colonial-era genocide of Native Americans to the new nation's constitutional embrace of race-based slavery to our present de facto segregated schools and institutional biases, is not just our history, but part of our national character. It is a poison for which we have never been able to find an antidote. In this moment, the "other" are people of Asian descent, who solely because of their physical appearance are being blamed irrationally for the spread of a virus.

We'd like to offer a menu of policy proposals to help address the problem, but to be honest, that feels futile. How do you craft a program that would keep another Dylann Roof

See GUNS on Next Page

The myth of American exceptionalism

By SCOTT WARREN
The Baltimore Sun

Scott Warren is a visiting fellow at the SNF Agora Institute at Johns Hopkins and the founder of a national civics education organization called Generation Citizen. Email: swarren@jhu.edu)

Amid unprecedented attacks on our democracy, with polarization at historic highs and trust in government at historic lows, a constant remains: Conservatives still insist in the exceptionalism of the American democratic experiment.

But while there is much to appreciate about a government that has survived civil wars and world wars alike, and has inched forward, albeit slowly, to provide expanded rights for many of its citizens, including immigrants, it is time to end the myth of American exceptionalism. Not only is the concept not true, but perhaps more importantly, there is much that we can, and should, learn from democracies throughout the rest of the world.

For example, Western European proportional electoral systems have encouraged more power sharing, and have shown much lower levels of partisan antagonism. This has been vital to counter the threat of far-right parties attempting to gain power in countries such as Germany and France. We may look to these countries as motivation to push for a multiparty system.

And in the face of hostile threats from China and COVID-19 alike, Taiwan has actually strengthened its democracy, largely through increased transparency of the financing of political parties and affirming the judiciary's complete independence. Granted, Taiwan democratic experiment is nascent in relation to America's, but we can still learn from Taiwan's example as we examine the role of money in our politics.

Canada has begun to implement the recommendations of a national truth and reconciliation commission, in the vein of South Africa's famed approach, to reconcile its historically oppressive treatment of Indigenous peoples. We could learn from this approach as we go through our own period of racial reckoning.

The exceptionalism of America, first coined by Alexis de Tocqueville in "Democracy in America" in 1840, originally was meant to convey the new country's unique combination of freedom and pluralism. Now, however, some use the phrase and ideology as a way to insinuate that we should not question the governmental structures in place. By this same logic, any examination of our country's oppressive racial history or imperialistic foreign policy pursuits is declared as counterproductive.

For example, Republicans took umbrage with President Barack Obama declaring early in his presidency in a speech in France, in an attempt to repair wounds opened during the Bush administration's Iraq War offensive, that "there have been times where America has shown arrogance and been dismissive, even derisive." Obama's self-reflective approach was described as an "apology tour" and taken by many as evidence that he did not love the United States.

Similarly, leading a national civics education organization for more than a decade, I often heard criticism that Action Civics, which teaches young people civics through empowering them to take action on issues they cared about, is fundamentally antithetical to American exceptionalism. This took hold in the Trump administration's recent 1776 report, which argued that an educational approach that questions America's exceptionalism "shatters the civic bonds that unite all Americans. It silences the discourse essential to a free society by breeding division, distrust, and hatred among citizens."

But it is difficult to claim that our democracy is exceptional when our democracy itself is at risk. This is truer than ever in the wake of the Jan. 6 insurrectionist attack. The peaceful transfer of power was one of the bulwarks of any exceptionalist stance, and the lack of accountability in the act of terror's aftermath is just as concerning.

Instead, the reality of our democracy is bleak. Only an estimated 20% of the public trusts the federal government to do the right thing. Less than 30% of young people even think democracy is the best form of governance. Polarization is only increasing. In the early days of the Biden administration, there is an 87-percentage-point gap between Democratic and Republican views of Joe Biden's job performance: 98% of Democrats approve, but only 11% of Republicans do. All of this leads to a government, especially at the federal level, that is gridlocked, and unable to accomplish anything substantive. The Economist's Democracy Index ranks the U.S. as the world's 25th most democratic nation out of 167 countries analyzed, a "flawed democracy." This is definitely not exceptional.

Democracy is not just at risk in the United States. Across the world, far-right parties are gaining power, autocrats are consolidating control, and civil society is being stifled. The Economist's index registered the worst global score for democracy since it was first launched in 2006, with only 8.4% of the world's population living in a full democracy, and 35.6% residing in authoritarian regimes.

The abdication of the myth of American exceptionalism should not be seen as defeat, however. Rather, in the face of unparalleled challenges, it should be seen as progress. Learning from democratic reforms across the world may be the best path we have to democratic renewal domestically.

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It's time to cut our losses in Afghanistan

By ADAM WEINSTEIN
Tribune News Service

Adam Weinstein is a research fellow at the Quincy Institute. He served as a U.S. Marine and deployed to Afghanistan in 2012 as part of a detachment to the 2nd Air Naval Gunfire Liaison Company where he served in Uruzgan Province in support of Australia's 2nd Commando Regiment.

The decision facing President Joe Biden in Afghanistan is complicated and difficult, but the stakes are clear. He can dramatically reduce the cost to the United States in lives and money by withdrawing U.S. troops by May 1 in accordance with an agreement reached last year with the Taliban. Or he could renege on that deal, which will assuredly lead to a resumption of violence, an open-ended American commitment to stay in Afghanistan costing tens of billions of dollars and many more American lives.

Most Americans do not want to see the country retreat into isolation, but they do want Washington to get its priorities straight. President Biden can start by bringing U.S. troops home.

America's nearly 20-year war in Afghanistan has cost the U.S. taxpayer roughly $1 trillion in direct expenditures, hundreds of billions of dollars in additional interest on the debt incurred to fund the war effort, and likely an additional $1 trillion in costs to care for veterans of the war for the next several decades. Costs have come down over the last year as troop levels have dropped and attacks on U.S. soldiers paused. But those reductions were due to the agreement reached with the Taliban that U.S. and NATO troops would leave by May 1. If we blow past that deadline, troop numbers, casualties and costs are certain to go back up.

Do we really need to expend so much more blood and treasure in Afghanistan when Americans feel knee-capped from a pandemic that's taken more than 500,000 lives and countless livelihoods? The most vulnerable populations face an inefficient vaccination process in the world's only superpower. Chicago's most violent neighborhoods are plagued by chronic underinvestment, New York is not sure how long it can keep its subway running, California faced the worst wildfire season in recent history, and middle America battles an exodus of jobs and an influx of drugs. Rather than tackle problems at home, an aloof Washington continues to look abroad. Remaining in Afghanistan is the epitome of this toxic habit.

Yet a recent, congressionally mandated report by the Afghanistan Study Group calls on President Biden to remain in Afghanistan, violating the terms of a U.S.-Taliban deal, and missing the opportunity to end America's longest war. If President Biden unilaterally abrogates the deal, our soldiers will once again be in danger. But proponents of staying the course aver that combat deaths had been relatively low since 2014.

Here is snapshot of the "relatively low" number of lives—26 to be exact—lost fighting an invisible enemy in the 12 months prior to the signing of the agreement:

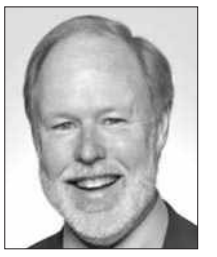
In summer 2019, an Afghan soldier shot two U.S. soldiers in Kandahar, killing Specialist Michael Nance from Chicago and PFC Brandon Kreischer from Ohio, ages 24 and 20, respectively. Sgts. 1st Class Javier Gutierrez and Antonio Rodriguez were killed together in another insider attack in early 2020. Lt. Col. Paul Voss's Air Force career began two months after 9/11 and ended when his Bombardier E-11A crashed in Ghazni province on Jan. 27, 2020. Staff Sgt. Ian McLaughlin was on his first deployment when he was killed in early 2020 in an IED attack claimed by the Taliban.

Rep. Ro Khanna, D-Calif., hit the nail on the head when he tweeted about the Afghanistan Study Group report: "Those who had any part in getting us into this 20 year war should not be opining about keeping us mired in it. This is what makes people so angry about Washington being broken and a defense of the status quo."

Troop levels will certainly need to rise, but keeping even 2,500 U.S. troops in Afghanistan long-term will cost billions of taxpayer dollars for a low chance of success at an undefined goal. As Brookings' Vanda Felbab-Brown observes, money spent in Afghanistan is money "taken away from other imperatives, such as rebuilding a productive middle class in the United States."

An open-ended troop commitment in Afghanistan will leave things at a violent simmer while it fades away into an afterthought only to be revisited after more lives and billions of dollars are lost. America cannot wait any longer.

Biden scored a win on COVID relief, but the battle for hearts and minds is far from over



By DOYLE MCMANUS
Los Angeles Times

Doyle McManus is a columnist for The Los Angeles Times. *Readers may send him email at doyle.mcmanus@latimes.com*

President Joe Biden is riding high thanks to his success in pushing through the massive $1.9 trillion COVID-19 relief bill he signed last week. Polls have found that the bill was supported by as many as 70% of Americans, and the president's approval rating has hit 55%, a level last attained by Barack Obama in 2009, the first year of his presidency.

But the moment of triumph is likely to be fleeting. Even sending $1,400 checks to most Americans can't guarantee that Biden will be able to enact the rest of his ambitious agenda or hold on to Democrats' majorities in Congress in next year's midterm election.

Problem No. 1 is the economy, which may not bounce back as quickly as Democrats hope. Biden is well aware of that danger; he was vice president in 2009, when Obama passed an economic stimulus bill, but recovery was nevertheless slow and voters gave him little credit.

Biden's relief bill is more than twice as big as Obama's, which will help, and if vaccinations quickly quell the COVID-19 pandemic, the economy should recover more rapidly than it did after the financial crash of the Obama years.

But for Democrats to reap a political benefit, it's not enough for the economy to bounce back: Voters have to also credit them for the recovery.

That's why Biden plans to hit the road this week to begin a long victory lap. And that's why his relief package includes benefits that were designed to be memorable, with checks and bank transfers sent directly to voters, plus monthly subsidies for families with children.

"The most important thing is to make sure the government part of this is working and get the checks out there," Democratic strategist Stan Greenberg told me. Even then, he warned, the midterm election is 20 long months away. "There's always a danger that voters will ask: 'What have you done for me lately?'"

That's where the rest of Biden's agenda comes in. The president still has a long list of legislation he wants to pass, including bills on infrastructure spending, improvements to health care, immigration reform, gun control and climate change programs.

If his agenda stalls—as is likely given united Republican opposition—he will look ineffective. And even if he gets what he wants from Congress, he'll please some Americans, but alienate others.

Republicans are already attacking Biden on issues where they believe he's vulnerable: spending levels, school reopening and immigration.

House Minority Leader Kevin McCarthy, R-Calif., denounced the COVID-19 relief bill last week as a waste of taxpayer money. "It's going to cost every family of four $22,000," he said on Fox News.

Republicans have also accused Biden of dragging his feet on his promise to reopen most schools in his first 100 days in office in the face of opposition from teachers unions.

Biden faces what may be his biggest challenge with immigration. It will be hard to get Congress to focus on reform—and on creating a path to citizenship for undocumented immigrants now in the country—while thousands of unaccompanied minors are flooding across the U.S.-Mexico border, as has been happening in recent weeks.

Biden also faces something President Donald Trump rarely had to deal with: criticism from within his party. On immigration, progressives like Rep. Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez, D-N.Y., have complained that large numbers of children are being detained in unacceptable conditions.

And the party's divisions are likely to grow more pronounced as Biden begins to push his broader legislative agenda, with progressives pushing for ambitious legislation, while vulnerable moderates in purple districts urge a more gradual approach.

As he navigates the political shoals, Biden will be acutely aware of a looming threat: The president's party almost always loses seats in Congress at the two-year mark.

Only once in the last 87 years has a president escaped that rule: 2002, when President George W. Bush appealed for national unity after the terrorist attacks of Sept. 11, 2001.

Democrats' majorities today are razor-thin. The Senate is divided 50-50, which means the Democrats enjoy a majority only because Vice President Kamala Harris is there to break ties. In the House, Democrats hold a slim nine-seat advantage, 220 to 211.

Strategists in both parties say the Democrats are more likely than not to lose their majority in the House. Republicans are bragging that their success in redrawing favorable congressional boundaries through redistricting has already moved them partway to winning back a majority of seats. That would deprive Biden of his ability to turn almost any of his priorities into law.

So yes, the COVID-19 bill was a nice big victory—but the president and his party shouldn't waste time savoring it.

GUNS

From Page 10

from walking into a Black church and killing nine people simply because they are Black? Or a white supremacist from walking into a Pittsburgh synagogue to shoot dead 11 people, as police accuse Robert Bowers of doing? Or a Patrick Crusius from driving 11 hours to an El Paso, Texas, Walmart, where police accuse him of killing 22 people and wounding 26 more?

Yes, there are interventions that can be done, anti-violence programs that can be better funded, more education about diverse people and cultures to break down the walls behind which fear and suspicion turn into irrational hatred. But it's a powerful poison, this racism.

Such acts of racist violence are the end product of a personal processing of myriad influences, including individual experiences and societal norms. When a sitting president gives a wink and a nod to white nationalists, when popular movies, television shows and other media stereotype certain racial groups and ethnicities, when a dominant culture of whiteness can't bring itself to understand the historical heft of that culture—it wasn't so long ago that people traded postcards depicting the lynchings of Black men—then racism will persist.

Lately the hate has been directed against Asian Americans, but they've been targeted before, from the immigration ban imposed by the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882 through the herding of Japanese Americans into concentration camps during World War II to the murder of Vincent Chin by Detroit autoworkers angry over which country was selling more cars. It's a long history. And the perpetrators are not always white men. Our fears and hatreds are functions of being human.

Our whole history of racial animosity, in fact, is long and staggeringly persistent, complicated and omnipresent. But after the anguish of the moment, the mouthing of the right words of rejection of racism and violence and the need for tolerance, we'll still be who we are: a society in which racism festers, guns are ubiquitous, misogyny persists, violence seems inevitable, and lessons stubbornly refuse to be learned.

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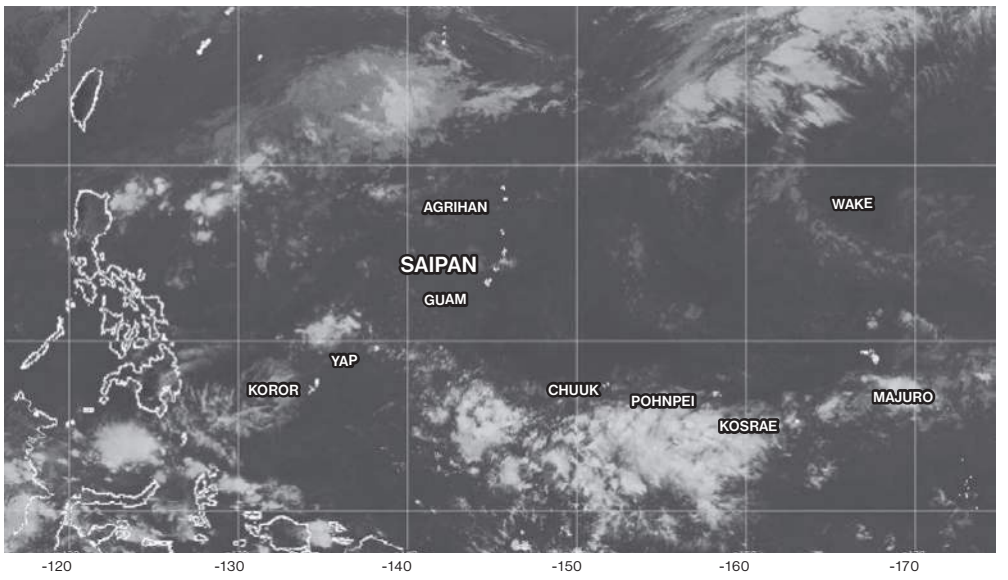
The Weather

5-DAY FORECAST FOR SAIPAN AND TINIAN

TODAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY
Mostly cloudy with isolated showers. East winds 5 to 10 mph.	Mostly cloudy with scattered showers. East winds 5 to 15 mph.	Partly cloudy. Isolated light showers.	Partly cloudy. Isolated light showers.	Partly cloudy. Isolated light showers.
86º / 76º	87º / 77º	87º / 77º	87º / 77º	87º / 77º

YESTERDAY'S SATELLITE IMAGE



PICTURE TIME: 6:33 AM, THURSDAY, MARCH 18, 2021

Western North Pacific between equator and 25N from 130E to 180.

A weak trade-wind convergence boundary passing through the CNMI is generating scattered showers this morning, mainly within Rota and Tinian waters. Elsewhere, partly cloudy skies and only a few showers are seen in the region. Buoys and altimetry data show seas between 5 and 6 feet.

Satellite image and accompanying information are provided by the National Weather Service. For an updated weather forecast, visit the National Weather Service Guam homepage: www.prh.noaa.gov/guam/

MICRONESIA		▲ ▼ °F
Guam and Rota	Clear	83 | 78 °F
Palau	Overcast	88 | 76 °F
Yap	Rain	80 | 71 °F
Chuuk	Overcast	83 | 79 °F
Pohnpei	Partly Cloudy	82 | 79 °F
Kosrae	Partly Cloudy	82 | 79 °F
Majuro	Mostly Cloudy	81 | 71 °F

DAY	SUNRISE	SUNSET
Today	6:22 AM	6:27 PM
Saturday	6:21 AM	6:27 PM
Sunday	6:20 AM	6:28 PM
Monday	6:19 AM	6:28 PM
Tuesday	6:19 AM	6:28 PM

DAY	MOONRISE	MOONSET	MOONRISE
Today	10:01 AM	11:10 PM	-
Saturday	10:44 AM	-	-
Sunday	-	12:01 AM	11:30 AM
Monday	-	12:54 AM	12:20 PM
Tuesday	-	1:46 AM	1:13 PM

AROUND THE GLOBE		▲ ▼ °F
Auckland	Clear	72 | 58 °F
Beijing	Clear	60 | 39 °F
Hong Kong	Scattered Clouds	68 | 65 °F
Honolulu	Clear	84 | 68 °F
London	Mist	56 | 41 °F
Los Angeles	Clear	90 | 75 °F
Manila	Clear	90 | 75 °F
Melbourne	Partly Cloudy	78 | 58 °F
Miami	Mostly Cloudy	71 | 56 °F
New York	Clear	35 | 24 °F
Osaka	Partly Cloudy	56 | 37 °F
Paris	Clear	65 | 43 °F
Pusan	Clear	61 | 36 °F
Rome	Clear	64 | 41 °F
Salem	Overcast	55 | 37 °F
San Francisco	Overcast	62 | 49 °F
Seoul	Clear	59 | 34 °F
Tokyo	Partly Cloudy	62 | 37 °F
Washington, DC	Clear	42 | 37 °F

TIDES: SAIPAN HARBOR TODAY		FEET
5:13 AM	Low Tide	0.90
10:34 AM	High Tide	1.58
5:47 PM	Low Tide	0.19
-	-	-

STOP THE SPREAD

The Governor's COVID-19 Task Force and Commonwealth Healthcare Corp. continue to encourage residents within the Marianas to practice social distancing, which means avoiding close contact with people in order to avoid catching the virus yourself and to avoid passing it on to others.

- Stay home as much as possible. Avoid unnecessary travel or public places.
- Avoid social gatherings in groups of more than 10.
- Choose drive-thru, take-out, or delivery options, or outdoor seating, if available, when dining in.
- Send only one healthy adult from the household run necessary errands, such as getting groceries or picking up medications. Leave children, elderly, and other vulnerable people at home as much as possible. When returning home from an errand, wash your hands before doing anything else.
- Older adults and people with chronic medical conditions are at higher risk of getting very sick from this illness. People at high risk should stay at home as much as possible.
- Create a household plan of action, https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prepare/checklisthousehold-ready.html
- Ensure a 30-day supply of all medicines.

Continue good hand hygiene

- Wash your hands for at least 20 seconds with soap and water, avoid touching your face, cover coughs and sneezes with a tissue or your sleeve.
- Use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer if soap and water are not readily available.

Know the signs and symptoms of COVID-19 and what to do if you become symptomatic

- Stay home when you are sick and if you recently traveled to a place with COVID-19. Self-quarantine means:
- ❏ Choosing a room in your house that can be used to separate sick household members from others.
- ❏ Washing your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer.
- ❏ Avoiding touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.
- ❏ Limiting visitors

CHCC appreciates the patience and understanding of the community at this time. To obtain general information about the CNMI COVID-19 response, contact the Governor's COVID-19 Task Force Hotline at 287-0046, 287-0489, 287-1089. These numbers are available Monday to Sunday, 7:30am - 4:30pm.

For medical information about COVID-19, reach out to the COVID-19 Infoline at the following numbers: 285-1672/1352. These numbers are available Monday to Friday, 7:30am - 4:30pm.

For mental health support and helpful tips during a crisis, call the Mental Health Support Line at 285-1856, 323-6560, 323-6561 These numbers are available Monday to Friday, 7:30am - 4:30 pm. For the 24/7 Disaster Distress Helpline, call SAMSHA at 1-800-985-5990.

For more information about DIY face coverings, visit https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/cloth-face-cover.html

For more information about CHCC programs, follow CHCC on Facebook, Instagram, Twitter at @cnmichcc, check out our website at www.chcc.gov.mp or call us at (670) 234-8950.

For more information on the Governor's COVID-19 Task Force, visit www.governor.gov.mpand, follow @GovernorCNMI on Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter.

This health advisory may be found online at http://www.chcc.gov.mp/pressrelease.html and at www.governor.gov.mp/covid-19.

Rumor control

During crises like this, oftentimes the spread of misinformation is just as dangerous as the virus itself. The CNMI is reminded to only share official and verified notices, press releases, and advisories from the Governor's COVID-19 Task Force and CHCC.

Source: Office of the Governor

NEWS DESK For news tips, corrections and requests for news coverage, call (670) 235-NEWS (6397), 235-2440, fax 235,3740. E-mail: editor@saipantribune.com. Website:www.saipantribune.com.

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E-mail: sales@saipantribune.com

FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF MARCH 5, 2021

DEPARTURES

SAIPAN-GUAM (GUM)

UA117	6:55am	7:35am	1, 5, 6
UA117	7:00am	7:40am	4

SAIPAN-MANILA (MNL)

UA117/183	6:55am	9:50pm	1, 5 via Guam

GUAM-MANILA (MNL)

UA183	8:00pm	9:50pm	1, 3, 5

ARRIVALS

GUAM (GUM)-SAIPAN

UA174	5:10am	5:51am	1, 5, 6
UA174	5:15am	5:56am	4

MANILA (MNL)-SAIPAN

UA184/174	10:55pm	5:56am+1	3 via Guam
UA184/174	10:40pm	5:51am+1	5 via Guam

MANILA (MNL)-GUAM

UA184	10:40pm	4:30am+1	5
UA184	10:55pm	4:45am+1	1, 3

LEGEND: Days: Monday (1), Tuesday (2), Wednesday (3), Thursday (4), Friday (5), Saturday (6) and Sunday (7); UA United Airlines • ETD: Estimated Time of Departure; ETA: Estimated Time of Arrival. *(The Saipan Tribune is not responsible for any changes in the schedule.)*

STAR MARIANAS AIR, INC.

FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF JANUARY 9, 2021

SAIPAN TO ROTA

FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
1301	8:30AM	9:00AM	Mon/Tues/Wed/Thurs/Fri
1302	11:00AM	11:30AM	Mon/Tues/Wed/Thurs/Fri/Sat
1303	3:30PM	4:00PM	Mon/Tues/Wed/Thurs/Fri/Sun

ROTA TO SAIPAN

FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
3101	9:30AM	10:00AM	Mon/Tues/Wed/Thurs/Fri
3102	12:00AM	12:30AM	Mon/Tues/Wed/Thurs/Fri/Sat
3103	4:30PM	5:00PM	Mon/Tues/Wed/Thurs/Fri/Sun

ROTA TO GUAM

FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
3401	12:15	12:45	Temporarily Unavailable

GUAM TO ROTA

FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
4301	13:00	13:30	Temporarily Unavailable

SAIPAN TO TINIAN

FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
1201	7:00	7:15	Temporarily Unavailable
1202	8:00	8:15	Daily
1203	9:00	9:15	Daily
1204	10:00	10:15	Daily
1205	11:00	11:15	Temporarily Unavailable
1206	12:00	12:15	Temporarily Unavailable
1207	13:00	13:15	Temporarily Unavailable
1208	14:00	14:15	Daily
1209	15:00	15:15	Daily
1210	16:00	16:15	Daily
1211	17:00	17:15	Daily
1212	17:00	17:15	Temporarily Unavailable

TINIAN TO SAIPAN

FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
2101	7:30	7:45	Temporarily Unavailable
2102	8:30	8:45	Daily
2103	9:30	9:45	Daily
2104	10:30	10:45	Daily
2105	11:30	11:45	Temporarily Unavailable
2106	12:30	12:45	Temporarily Unavailable
2107	13:30	13:45	Temporarily Unavailable
2108	14:30	14:45	Daily
2109	15:30	15:45	Daily
2110	16:30	16:45	Daily
2111	17:30	17:45	Daily
2112	18:30	18:45	Temporarily Unavailable

Don Farrell and his Pacific passion project to teach Tinian to the world

By LINDSAY NASH
SPECIAL TO THE SAIPAN TRIBUNE

The Yeh-Yeh series shares rich stories and oral traditions of Saipan. The name is inspired by Refaluwasch elder Lino Olapai's childhood memory of being told to say "yehyeh" as the elders told stories. Once it was quiet, the elders knew the children were asleep.

Don Farrell is the author of *Atomic Bomb Island.* He has spent his life writing the history of the Mariana Islands.
LINDSAY NASH

When Don Farrell left his home in the mountains above San Bernardino on New Year's Eve at the dawn of 1977, he had to chip ice from his driveway to get out.

From Los Angeles, he flew to Honolulu then boarded another plane in the dark to his destination—"Gwaim." (That's right, he didn't even know the pronunciation.)

The 30-year-old marine biologist, scuba aficionado, and teacher was setting out on a new adventure, answering a call to teach in Guam after Typhoon Pamela had devastated the island and scared the previous teachers away.

He had to go to the library to even learn about Guam; he had never heard of it. "I searched in the encyclopedia for G-U-A-M and there it was, with two paragraphs, an American flag, and its coordinates: *145° East, 13.5° North.* Coral Reef Country."

When he arrived, he blinked his unbelieving eyes as the sun finally rose in his new destination. "Jesus!" he exclaimed. "There were coconuts, and hibiscus, and bougainvillea blooming. It's freakin' January. And, I said to myself, 'OK, I like what I see so far.'"

Now 73, Farrell sits in a lawn chair in the shade of a *lada* tree on North Field, just near the bomb pits, on Tinian. It's hard to grapple with the gravity of this exact spot, barely marked today for its incredible role in world history. This place where the atomic bombs were loaded quietly and covertly into the *Enola Gay* to fly to Japan at the culmination of World War II.

Yeh-Yeh SERIES

But Farrell is working tirelessly to change that. The accomplished historian, teacher, and author has recently published a new book, *Atomic Bomb Island*, and he's already working on the next one.

He laughs easily and often behind his long gray beard. His Hawaiian shirt features not the usual tropical flowers but vintage war planes. He seems as surprised as anyone that "a boy from Oklahoma" has become a published author and historian.

When he first arrived in Guam, Farrell taught at Inarajan Junior High School in the south. It was not a popular post at the time. While the rest of the teachers were assigned to bigger schools and air-conditioned housing, Farrell ended up living in a trailer on a beach in Merizo near the Chamorro community. "It turned out to be the best thing that ever happened to me," he said.

And it was on a chance trip to check out his new school library that Farrell discovered a treasure trove of historical books on World War II. "Someone had purchased every major WWII novel ever published about the Pacific," he said. "So I started reading them. I didn't know the story of Guam or what happened to the Chamorros. And then I started noticing the names of my students, and how they were the same as the names in the books. I started asking my students, 'Hey, are you related to this guy?"

Farrell started interviewing anyone he could who lived through the Merizo

See FARRELL on Next Page

COMMONWEALTH PORTS AUTHORITY
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REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS FOR SAFETY MANAGEMENT SYSTEM FOR CNMI AIRPORTS PROJECT NO. CPA-SA-001-21

The Commonwealth Ports Authority's (CPA) is a public corporation and autonomous agency of the Government of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI). In accordance with its Procurement Rules and Regulations, CPA hereby seeks the services of qualified consulting firms to provide professional services for a CNMI-wide Airport Safety Management System (SMS) Implementation Program, Project No. CPA-SA-001-21 (AIP Pending).

The project is being funded by the U.S. Federal Aviation Administration and CPA. These services are in accordance with CPA's Procurement Rules and Regulations and procedures shall be in full compliance with Section 40-50-202: Architect-Engineer Design and Construction Management Services.

The Request for Qualification (RFQ) Package is available at CPA's Administration Office, 2nd floor of the arrival terminal at the Francisco C. Ada/Saipan International Airport. No fee is required for obtaining the proposal package. Electronic copies may be made available upon request to Ms. Wendi L. Prater, CPA's Executive Assistant/Project Manager.

Questions regarding this request for qualification statements shall be submitted in writing to the CPA Administration Office or emailed to Ms. Prater at wprater@cnmiports.com or cpa.engr@pticom.com by no later than 5:00 p.m. (CHST), Friday, March 19, 2021.

The statements of professional qualification will be evaluated based on the criteria available in the RFQ package.

Interested Consultants are requested to submit one (1) original, four (4) copies and one (1) electronic version in .pdf of their statements of professional qualifications no later than **5:00 p.m., TUESDAY, MARCH 29, 2021.** Statements of qualification must be presented by a combination of both brochures and the use of current U.S. Government Standard Form 330.

The CPA reserves the right to reject any or all statements of professional qualification for any reason, if in its sole opinion to do so would be in its best interest.

/s/ CHRISTOPHER S. TENORIO
Executive Director
Date: February 24, 2021

COMMONWEALTH PORTS AUTHORITY
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REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS FOR PAVEMENT MANAGEMENT SYSTEM PROGRAM FOR CNMI AIRPORTS PROJECT NO. CPA-SA-002-21

The Commonwealth Ports Authority's (CPA) is a public corporation and autonomous agency of the Government of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI). In accordance with its Procurement Rules and Regulations, CPA hereby seeks the services of qualified consulting firms to provide professional services for a CNMI-wide Airport Pavement Management System (PMP) Program, Project No. CPA-SA-002-21 (AIP Pending).

The project is being funded by the U.S. Federal Aviation Administration and CPA. These services are in accordance with CPA's Procurement Rules and Regulations and procedures shall be in full compliance with Section 40-50-202: Architect-Engineer Design and Construction Management Services.

The Request for Qualification (RFQ) Package is available at CPA's Administration Office, 2nd floor of the arrival terminal at the Francisco C. Ada/Saipan International Airport. No fee is required for obtaining the proposal package. Electronic copies may be made available upon request to Ms. Wendi L. Prater, CPA's Executive Assistant/Project Manager.

Questions regarding this request for qualification statements shall be submitted in writing to the CPA Administration Office or emailed to Ms. Prater at wprater@cnmiports.com or cpa.engr@pticom.com by no later than 5:00 p.m. (CHST), Monday, March 22, 2021.

The statements of professional qualification will be evaluated based on the criteria available in the RFQ package.

Interested Consultants are requested to submit one (1) original, four (4) copies and one (1) electronic version in .pdf of their statements of professional qualifications no later than **5:00 p.m., WEDNESDAY, MARCH 31, 2021.** Statements of qualification must be presented by a combination of both brochures and the use of current U.S. Government Standard Form 330.

The CPA reserves the right to reject any or all statements of professional qualification for any reason, if in its sole opinion to do so would be in its best interest.

/s/ CHRISTOPHER S. TENORIO
Executive Director
Date: February 24, 2021

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AGENDA

***** March 25, 2021 *****

Pursuant to the Open Government Act, Governor Ralph DLG. Torres and Lt. Governor Arnold I. Palacios, through the Commonwealth Casino Commission ("Commission"), hereby give notice that the Commission has scheduled its regular monthly meeting on Thursday, March 25, 2021 at 10:00 a.m. at the Commission's 2nd Floor Main Conference Room at the Springs Plaza in Gualo Rai, Saipan. However, pursuant to Governor Torres' Executive Orders and Directives on the ongoing threat from the COVID-19 pandemic and the limited space available, access to the Commission's meeting will only be available via videoconference.

The following Agenda will be discussed:

I. PRELIMINARIES:

A. Call to Order
B. Roll Call
C. Adoption of Agenda

II. REPORTS:

A. Report by the Chairman
B. Report by the Acting Executive Director

III. NEW BUSINESS:

A. Governor's letter to IPI, dated February 26, 2021, regarding Notice of Non-Compliance of the Initial Gaming Facility Implementation Schedule. Requirements for submission of Compliance and Certification documents.
B. Covid-19 Task Force protocols on Commission operations (undergoing 14-day quarantine with mandatory vaccination & PCR testing before returning to work).
C. Other New Business Matters

IV. EXECUTIVE SESSION:

A. Consult with Legal Counsel
B. CCC Personnel Matters
C. Continuation of Deliberation on consolidated Administrative Hearings Case Nos. 2020-001 and 2020-003.

V. ADJOURNMENT

The Commission reserves the right to amend this Agenda and take action on the amended Agenda pursuant to 1 CMC §9910 (b). Pursuant to 1 CMC §9912 (a)(7) and 1 CMC §9912 (c), the Commission may vote to meet in Executive Session. In addition, the Commission may extend its official meeting for another day or more, if necessary. For those interested in joining or attending the meeting via videoconference, please contact the Commission at info@cnmicasinocommission.com for instructions on how to log-in to the conference site.

/s/ Edward C. DeLeon Guerrero
Chairman

Senate confirms Faisao, Tenorio

The Senate confirmed the appointment of Melvin Faisao as a member of the Northern Marianas Housing Corp. board of directors and Janice A. Tenorio as a member of the Commonwealth Utilities Corp. board of directors during a session on Tinian last Friday.

All nine senators voted for the confirmation of Faisao and Tenorio. Sens. Paul A. Manglona (Ind-Rota) and Edith E. Deleon Guerrero (D-Saipan) appeared at the session via Zoom.

Faisao's term will be determined upon the organization of the NMHC board of directors. He is a former member of the House of Representatives and former secretary of the Department of Community and Cultural Affairs.

Tenorio will serve a four-year term. She is a former chairwoman of the Board of Education.

Gov. Ralph DLG Torres and Lt. Gov. Arnold I. Palacios appointed Faisao last Jan. 29 to serve on the NMHC board of directors representing the third Senatorial District (Saipan).

Torres and Palacios appointed Tenorio last Jan. 25 to serve on the CUC board of directors representing the Third Senatorial District (Saipan).

The Senate Committee on Executive Appointments & Government Investigations chaired by Sen. Francisco Cruz (R-Tinian) recommended the confirmation of Faisao and Tenorio. ***(Ferdie de la Torre)***

Robert Tenorio Torres
Attorney at Law
Plata Drive, Whispering Palms (Chalan Kiya)
P.O. Box 503758, Saipan, MP 96950
Tel: (670) 234-7859 | Fax. (670) 234-5749
Attorney for Petitioner Merced M. Tomokane for Claimant Bank of Guam

IN THE SUPERIOR COURT OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS

IN THE MATTER OF THE ESTATE OF: DAVID PALACIOS, Decedent.) **Civil Action No. 20- 0248 NOTICE OF HEARING ONPETITION FOR LETTERS OF ADMINISTRATION Date: April 1, 2021 Time: 10:00am Judge: Joseph N. Camacho**

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that Petitioner, Merced M. Tomokane for Creditor Bank of Guam, of Saipan, CNMI ("Petitioner"), has petitioned the Superior Court of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands for Letter of Administration of the Estate of David Palacios, Decedent.

The hearing on the Petition for Letters of Administration by Merced M. Tomokane, as Petitioner for Creditor Bank of Guam, is scheduled to be heard on **April 1, 2021 at 10:00 a.m.**, at the Superior Court of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, *Guma' Hustisia*, Civic Center, Saipan, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands. All interested persons or any potential or unknown heirs of the Estate should appear at this hearing.

Dated this 21st day of January, 2021.

/s/_____
Clerk of Court/Deputy Clerk

Name: Peter N. Somorang
& Lillia Rein T. Somorang
Address: P.O. Box 502342
Saipan, MP 96950
Phone: 287-5185 / 285-3695

Pro Se

IN THE SUPERIOR COURT OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS

In the Matter of the Petition for the Adoption of: J.R.T.R.J. Minor Child) FCD-AD CIVIL ACTION NO. 20-0419 **NOTICE OF HEARING**

By: Peter N. Somorang & Lillia Rein T. Somorang Petitioners

Notice is hereby given that the above-entitled matter is set for a hearing on April 7, 2021 at 9:00 a.m. in Courtroom Superior Court, before Associate Judge Teresa Kim-Tenorio.

Dated this 10th day of March, 2021.

Patrick V. Diaz
Clerk of Court

/s/
By: Deputy Clerk of Court

Oliver M. Manglona (F0489)
Attorney at Law
Plata Drive, Whispering Palms (Chalan Kiya)
P.O. Box 7862 SVRB, Saipan, MP 96950
Tel: (670) 285-3750 | Fax. (670) 234-5749
Attorney for Petitioner Carolina Sandoval Techur

IN THE SUPERIOR COURT FOR THE COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS

IN THE MATTER OF THE ESTATE OF NEWHART IVAI TECHUR, Deceased.) **Civil Action No.21-0076 NOTICE OF HEARING AND NOTICE TO CREDITORS Judge: Joseph N. Camacho Date: April 1, 2021 Time: 10:00 a.m. Courtroom: TBA**

TO: THE GENERAL PUBLIC, ANY HEIRS, CLAIMANTS, OR CREDITORS OF THE LATE NEWHART IVAI TECHUR, OR HIS ESTATE:

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that Carolina Sandoval Techur has petitioned the Superior Court of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands to issue Letters of Administration for the Estate of Newhart Ivai Techur, the deceased. The attorney for Petitioner is Oliver M. Manglona, Attorney at Law, whose address is Plata Drive, Chalan Kiya, P.O. Box 7862 SVRB, Saipan, MP 96950.

The hearing on the Petition is scheduled to be heard on the date and time set forth above at the Superior Court of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands. All interested persons or entities should appear at this hearing.

Any and all persons, creditors, or entities having claims against the deceased or his Estate are hereby required by law to file their claims with the Clerk of Court within sixty (60) days of this publication or the claim(s) will be barred. A copy of your claim should also be sent to **OLIVER M. MANGLONA**, Attorney at Law, at the address above indicated.

Dated this 3RD day of March, 2021.

By: /s/
Clerk of Court/Deputy Clerk of Court

FARRELL

From Page 13

massacre, when Japanese soldiers massacred nearly 50 Chamorro men and women from Merizo in two separate confrontations. He continued to learn all he could, reading books, and talking to anyone who would talk to him.

His original teaching position eventually fizzled out and he moved on to other jobs. He sold Revlon lipsticks and spent his afternoons underwater, diving. He bought a sailboat and sailed to the Northern Islands, once even leading a group of birders for the Smithsonian, a gig that paid for his new sail. He was living the good life.

But his interest in island history only grew and he soon began writing regular articles for *Pacific Daily News*. It wasn't long before he attracted the attention of local political figures, and he was soon offered a job as the public relations officer for the Guam legislature.

It was in this position that his then boss, David Tydingco, convinced him to turn all his articles into a book. Farrell was incredulous. Who would want to read all these stories? But he found a publisher in Japan. And Farrell took out a $10,000 loan to pay for it.

This book was published as the first edition of the Americanization of Guam in 1981. And with Tydinco's help, they sold all 1,000 copies.

"Around that time, I made a critical decision for myself. I would focus on the history of the Pacific. I really wasn't considered anybody in anything. But, I decided then I would focus all my effort on the history of the Marianas."

And that's exactly what Farrell has done. That first book turned into a new edition, then more titles, as Farrell left work in the public sector to move to Tinian, his wife Carmen's home island.

Farrell once again turned to teaching, and focused on his writing, including a two-year project to research and write a modern history textbook for the Public School System, *The History of the Northern Mariana Islands*.

But it was an email from a librarian in Guam that pulled his focus even narrower. That friend had a directive: Go to the National Archives. Ask to see Record Group 77. The Tinian Atomic Bomb files.

Farrell was intrigued—so much so he followed his friend's advice. And sure enough, when he made the trip to ask for the files, a young researcher at the National Archives in College Park, Maryland, gave a forlorn look and then disappeared. He returned 45 minutes later, dirtier and dustier, with the box of files. The notes weren't in order. And Farrell couldn't decipher any of it. There were code names and dates. But he could tell it was important, and there was a story to tell.

He copied every one of the some-2,500 pages, put them in a box and hand-carried them all the way back to Saipan. He found atomic bomb experts to help him decode and transcribe every page. This incredible research became his book, *Tinian and the Bomb*, a detailed account about the important and often overlooked role Tinian played in the Pacific Theater of WWII.

His newest release, *Atomic Bomb Island*, is a new edition of that book, published by his first stateside publisher, Stackpole Books. It includes updates from some of the best atomic bomb critics in the world and includes new photos from Los Alamos.

Farrell is now working on his next book: *Seabees and Superforts: Tinian's role in the Ultimate Defeat of Japan*.

Farrell is quick to say that writing books is simply his passion. He's not getting rich. But he gets so much more out of it.

"Since my first visit to Tinian on Easter weekend 1980, the people of Tinian have treated me kindly. So many told me stories about life on Tinian after the war, stories that I have shared with the outside world."

He gestures out to the abandoned and overgrown North Field, once the largest operating airport in the world, housing 200 roaring B-29s that often shook the entire island. Now, only the occasional kingfisher soars through the tangan tangan branches in the breeze.

"I will spend the rest of my life doing this," Farrell said. "Because I live here. And because it's an important story."

Lindsay Nash is a writer and photographer who lives on Saipan. She is a member of the Marianas Writers' Movement and is currently writing a novel about 20th century Saipan. Email her at lindsayinsaipan@gmail.com.

DIVISION OF PROCUREMENT SERVICES
CNMI GOVERNMENT

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS
RFP NO.: RFP21-OPD-062

SUBMISSION DATE: APRIL 19, 2021 TIME: 09:00 A.M.

"COMPREHENSIVE INTER-ISLAND SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT FOR THE OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR – OFFICE OF PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT"

COPIES OF THE SPECIFICATIONS MAY BE OBTAINED AT THE OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR OF PROCUREMENT SERVICES, LOCATED AT THE FORMER EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT OFFICE, ASCENCION DRIVE, BUILDING NO. 1301, CAPITOL HILL, SAIPAN, DURING REGULAR WORKING HOURS.

****FOR YOUR SAFETY & OURS: ALL INTERESTED INDIVIDUALS ARE REQUIRED TO USE A FACE MASK & ARE REQUIRED TO REGISTER UPON ENTRY****

QUESTIONS REGARDING THIS ITB MAY BE MADE IN ANY MODE OF WRITTEN COMMUNICATION TO **MR. A. KODEP OGUMORO-ULUDONG**, VIA E-MAIL AT kodep.uludong@opd.gov.mp **NO LATER THAN 4:30 P.M., LOCAL TIME, APRIL 05, 2021**. ALL QUESTIONS & ANSWERS SHALL BE SHARED WITH ALL PROPECTIVE PROPOSERS.

THE PROVISIONS OF THE CNMI PROCUREMENT REGULATIONS, NMIAC SECTION 70-30.3-725 AND 70-30.3-730 PROHIBITING GRATUITIES, KICKBACKS AND CONTINGENT FEES SHALL APPLY.

THE CNMI GOVERNMENT RESERVES THE RIGHT TO REJECT ANY OR ALL BIDS, OR PORTIONS THEREOF, AND WAIVE IMMATERIAL DEFECTS IF TO DO SO WOULD BE IN THE BEST INTEREST OF THE CNMI GOVERNMENT.

/S/ A. KODEP OGUMORO-ULUDONG
DIRECTOR, OPD

/S/ FRANCISCO C. AGUON
ACTING DIRECTOR, PS

DIVISION OF PROCUREMENT SERVICES
CNMI GOVERNMENT

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS
RFP NO.: RFP21-OPD-063

SUBMISSION DATE: APRIL 19, 2021 TIME: 09:30 A.M.

"TINIAN ZERO WASTE STUDY AND PILOT PROJECT FOR THE OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR – OFFICE OF PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT"

COPIES OF THE SPECIFICATIONS MAY BE OBTAINED AT THE OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR OF PROCUREMENT SERVICES, LOCATED AT THE FORMER EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT OFFICE, ASCENCION DRIVE, BUILDING NO. 1301, CAPITOL HILL, SAIPAN, DURING REGULAR WORKING HOURS.

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/S/ A. KODEP OGUMORO-ULUDONG
DIRECTOR, OPD

/S/ FRANCISCO C. AGUON
ACTING DIRECTOR, PS

PROCUREMENT AND SUPPLY
Commonwealth Healthcare Corporation

REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL
RFP21-CHCC/AOC-COVID-19-002

SUBMISSION DEADLINE: MARCH 22, 2021 TIME:10:00AM (CHST)

"CHCC COVID-19 VACCINATION COMMUNICATIONS & MARKETING"

INTERESTED PARTIES CAN DOWLOAD THIS REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL FROM THE CHCC WEBSITE [WWW.CHCC.GOV.MP]. ONCE AT THE SITE, NAVIGATE TO **REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS** TAB ON THE LEFT NAVIGATION BAR. CLICK ON THE URL FOR THIS RFP. YOU WILL BE REQUIRED TO ENTER DATA TO ALLOW US TO TRACK ALL REQUESTS FOR THIS OPPORTUNITY.

THE CHCC RESERVES THE RIGHT TO REJECT ANY AND ALL PROPOSAL AND TO WAIVE ANY IMPERFECTIONS IN ANY PROPOSAL, IF TO DO SO SHALL BE IN THE INTEREST OF THE CHCC. ALL PROPOSALS SHALL BECOME THE EXCLUSIVE PROPERTY OF THE COMMONWEALTH HEALTHCARE CORPORATION.

/S/ ESTHER L. MUNA
CHCC CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

/S/ CORA P. ADA
DIRECTOR OF PROCUREMENT & S UPPLY

JOB VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT

AUDIT MANAGER
EXAMINATION NO. OPA-21-001
Opening Date: January 14, 2021
Closing Date: March 19, 2021

AUDITOR I
EXAMINATION NO. OPA-21-002
Opening Date: March 19, 2021
Closing Date: April 9, 2021

For more information, please visit our website at www.opacnmi.com or come visit us at our office in Capitol Hill. Interested persons may also pick up a copy of the Examination Announcement at the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) in Garapan.

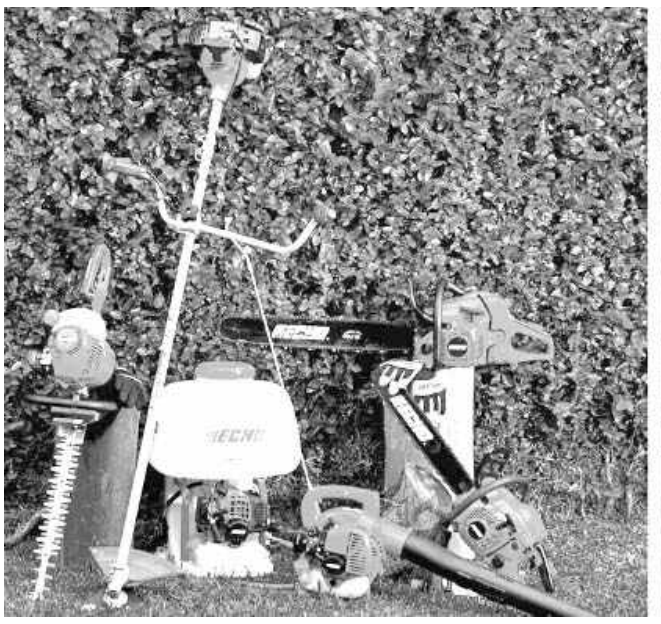
Office of the Public Auditor
Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands
Website: http://opacnmi.com
Address: 1236 Yap Drive, Capital Hill, Saipan, MP 96950
Mailing Address: PO Box 501399, Saipan MP 96950
Email: mail@opacnmi.com
Phone: (670) 322-6481 Fax: (670) 322-7812

Business

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Marianas Irrigation & Landscape Guam ships high quality landscaping equipment to Saipan, Tinian, Rota, Yap, Chuuk, Kosrae, Pohnpei, Marshall Islands, Palau, and the Caroline Islands.

Marianas Irrigation & Landscape provides best products and service



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Marianas Irrigation & Landscape encourages customers to get a quote on all their equipment. Here are samples of their Echo and Shindaiwa products.

By BEA CABRERA
beacabrerasaipan@gmail.com
CORRESPONDENT

For five years, Marianas Irrigation & Landscape in Guam has been in the business of improvement—your surroundings, productivity, value of property, environment, beautify your home, and strengthen the image of your business. Owned by Dave Crisostomo and Ray Sudo, they initially serviced various golf courses and hotels through their wholesale line.

"…but August last year, they opened up a new door and started operations in the retail department… at Marianas Irrigation & Landscape, we strive to provide nothing but the best of products and services. We want to continue to build trust with each of our customers and ensure their satisfaction," said Crisostomo, who is Marianas Irrigation & Landscape's CEO, while Sudo is the general manager.

"We provide maintenance services for products along with other small engine repairs, licensed to sell pesticide and herbicide, and are able to ship merchandise throughout our neighboring outer islands," Crisostomo added.

Marianas Irrigation & Landscape is located in Barrigada Heights, Guam and provides topnotch equipment such as Echo and Shindaiwa retail services for lawn equipment which include, bush-cutters, commercial backpack blowers and handheld blowers, chainsaws, pressure washers, generators, trim lines/blades, and various accessories for our units. Their products have a manufacturer's warranty for up to five years, dependent upon unit type and use both for residential and commercial.

According to Sudo, they got into this business because landscaping equipment was somewhat scarce in Guam. "We have limited vendors with high price tags. Marianas Irrigation provides competitive prices and equipment services for Guam and our sister islands , the CNMI …On Saipan, we have done worked for Lao Lao Bay Golf Course and Tropex Garden Company," he said.

"Customer satisfaction is our No. 1 priority and we listen to our clients and their needs in order to help them decide which product or service would be best suited for them. We practice sales integrity and true customer care as customary for our familial traditions. Here in Guam and throughout the Marianas, we understand the importance of taking care of each other. It's not just sales, it is sales integrity because are here to help you take care of your home," he added

Marianas Irrigation & Landscape Guam ships to Saipan, Tinian Rota, Yap, Chuuk, Kosrae, Pohnpei, Marshall Islands, Palau, and the Caroline Islands. They are open from Monday to Saturday, 9am-6pm, and Sundays, 11am-4pm. For more information, call (671) 735-744 or email: marianasirrigation@gmail.com/dwc0961@gmail.com/rdnlsi@gmail.com.

Trump's taxes in hand, Manhattan DA's probe heats up

NEW YORK (AP)—With former President Donald Trump's tax returns finally in hand, a team of New York prosecutors led by a newly hired former mob-buster is sending out fresh subpoenas and meeting face-to-face with key witnesses, scrutinizing Trump's business practices in granular detail.

Amid the swirl of activity, the Manhattan district attorney's office is scheduled Friday to meet again with Trump's longtime former personal lawyer Michael Cohen, according to a person familiar with the investigation.

It would be the eighth time he has spoken with investigators working for District Attorney Cyrus R. Vance Jr., dating to Cohen's time in federal prison for tax evasion and campaign finance violations.

The person familiar with the inquiry wasn't authorized to speak publicly about the interview and spoke to The Associated Press on the condition of anonymity.

In a recent interview with Cohen, investigators asked questions about Trump's Seven Springs estate as part of an inquiry into whether the value of the 213-acre Westchester County property was improperly inflated to reduce his taxes.

Investigators asked Cohen about individuals involved in the appraisal of the estate and benefits derived from its valuation, including a $21 million income tax deduction.

Cohen was released to home confinement last year amid coronavirus fears, and his recent meetings have been conducted via video conference.

Vance's office declined to comment, as did Cohen's lawyer, Lanny Davis. A message seeking comment was sent to the Trump Organization.

Vance announced last week that he would leave office at the end of the year and not seek reelection, but in a memo to staff, he stressed that the investigation wouldn't stop.

"The work continues," Vance wrote, echoing his short statement after the U.S. Supreme Court ruled last month that he could have Trump's tax records.

Vance recently hired former mafia prosecutor Mark Pomerantz—who, as a federal prosecutor, oversaw the prosecution of Gambino crime boss John Gotti—as a special assistant district attorney to assist in the wide-ranging probe of Trump's finances.

The inquiry, according to court filings, includes an examination of whether Trump or his businesses lied about the value of assets to gain favorable loan terms and tax benefits. The district attorney also is scrutinizing hush-money payments paid to women on Trump's behalf.

IRS will delay tax filing due date until May 17

Americans will be getting extra time to prepare their taxes. The Internal Revenue Service says it's delaying the traditional tax filing deadline from April 15 until May 17.

The IRS announced the decision Wednesday and said it would provide further guidance in the coming days. The move provides more breathing room for taxpayers and the IRS alike to cope with changes brought on by the pandemic.

"The IRS wants to continue to do everything possible to help taxpayers navigate the unusual circumstances related to the pandemic, while also working on important tax administration responsibilities," IRS Commissioner Chuck Rettig said in a statement.

The decision postpones when individual taxpayers must file their return and when their payment is due. The IRS said taxpayers who owe money would not face any further penalties or interest if they pay by May 17. The new deadline also applies to individuals who pay self-employment tax.

Taxpayers do not need to take any action to take advantage of the new deadline. Those who need more time beyond May 17 can request an extension until October 15.

The new deadline does not apply to estimated tax payments that are due on April 15; those remain due by that day.

The decision to extend the deadline comes after an intense year for the chronically underfunded IRS. The pandemic hit in the middle of last year's tax filing season, setting the agency back in terms of processing. The IRS has also been a key player in doling out government relief payments, and is currently helping to send out the third round of payments in the middle of the current tax filing season.

Additionally, the extension gives the IRS time to issue guidance on recent tax law changes. The American Rescue Plan excludes the first $10,200 of unemployment benefits from federal taxes for those making less than $150,000.

"Never before has the law changed so substantially in the middle of tax filing season," Patrick Thomas, director of Notre Dame Law School's Tax Clinic, said in a statement.

The IRS must issue guidance for taxpayers and tax preparers alike as millions of returns already filed likely do not account for this change.

A number of lawmakers and professionals from the tax community have urged the tax filing season be extended to accommodate for these pressures. The House Ways and Means Committee applauded the move. ***(AP)***

STOCK PORTFOLIO

LEADING INDICATORS

DOW	S&P	NASDAQ
33,015.37	3,974.12	13,525.20
0.58%	0.29%	0.40%
+189.42	+11.41	+53.64

EXCHANGE RATES

In U.S. dollar terms

Australian Dollar	1.2782	Hong Kong Dollar	7.7649	Russian Ruble	72.9616
British Pound	0.7173	Indian Rupee	72.0579	Singapore Dollar	1.3420
Canadian Dollar	1.2404	Japanese Yen	108.9560	South Korean Won	1104.23
Chinese Yuan	6.4003	Malaysian Ringgit	4.0735	Swiss Franc	0.9236
Euro	0.8364	New Zealand Dollar	1.3812	Taiwan Dollar	27.9157
		Philippine Peso	47.7981	Thailand Baht	30.7540

Nation

Man charged with killing 8 people at Georgia massage parlors

ATLANTA (AP)—A white gunman was charged Wednesday with killing eight people at three Atlanta-area massage parlors in an attack that sent terror through the Asian American community, which has increasingly been targeted during the coronavirus pandemic.

A day after the shootings, investigators were trying to unravel what might have compelled 21-year-old Robert Aaron Long to commit the worst mass killing in the U.S. in almost two years.

Long told police that Tuesday's attack was not racially motivated. He claimed to have a "sex addiction," and authorities said he apparently lashed out at what he saw as sources of temptation. But those statements spurred outrage and widespread skepticism given the locations and that six of the eight victims were women of Asian descent.

The shootings appear to be at the "intersection of gender-based violence, misogyny and xenophobia," said state Rep. Bee Nguyen, the first Vietnamese American to serve in the Georgia House and a frequent advocate for women and communities of color.

Atlanta Mayor Keisha Lance Bottoms said that regardless of the shooter's motivation, "it is unacceptable, it is hateful and it has to stop."

Authorities said they didn't know if Long ever went to the massage parlors where the shootings occurred but that he was heading to Florida to attack "some type of porn industry."

AP

Jessica Lang pauses and places her hand on the door in a moment of grief after dropping off flowers with her daughter Summer at Youngs Asian Massage parlor where four people were killed, Wednesday, March 17, 2021, in Acworth, Ga.

"He apparently has an issue, what he considers a sex addiction, and sees these locations as something that allows him to go to these places, and it's a temptation for him that he wanted to eliminate," Cherokee County sheriff's Capt. Jay Baker told reporters.

Baker drew criticism for saying Long had "a really bad day" and "this is what he did." A Facebook page appearing to belong to Baker promoted a T-shirt with racist language about China and the coronavirus last year.

The Facebook account featured numerous photos of Baker going back months, including one of him in uniform outside the sheriff's office. The account was deleted Wednesday night, and Baker did not immediately respond to voicemails and an email seeking comment. The sheriff's office also did not respond to a message.

Meanwhile, Sheriff Frank Reynolds said it was too early to tell if the attack was racially motivated—"but the indicators right now are it may not be."

The Atlanta mayor said police have not been to the massage parlors in her city beyond a minor potential theft.

"We certainly will not begin to blame victims," Bottoms said.

The attack was the sixth mass killing this year in the U.S., and the deadliest since the August 2019 Dayton, Ohio, shooting that left nine people dead, according to a database compiled by The Associated Press, USA Today and Northeastern University.

It follows a lull in mass killings during the pandemic in 2020, which had the smallest number of such attacks in more than a decade, according to the database, which tracks mass killings defined as four or more dead, not including the shooter.

The killings horrified the Asian American community, which saw the shootings as an attack on them, given a recent wave of assaults that coincided with the spread of the coronavirus across the United States. The virus was first identified in China, and then-President Donald Trump and others have used racially charged terms to describe it.

The attacks began when five people were shot at Youngs Asian Massage Parlor near Woodstock, about 30 miles (50 kilometers) north of Atlanta, authorities said. Four died: 33-year-old Delaina Ashley Yaun, 54-year-old Paul Andre Michels, 44-year-old Daoyou Feng and 49-year-old Xiaojie Tan, who owned the business.

Yaun and her husband came to the spa on a date, her mother, Margaret Rushing, told WAGA-TV. Yaun leaves behind a 13-year-old son and 8-month-old daughter.

Republicans seize on immigration as border crossings surge

WASHINGTON (AP)—Delegation trips to the border. Apocalyptic warnings. A flurry of press conferences.

Republicans still divided over former President Donald Trump's legacy are seizing on his signature campaign issue, turning their focus to immigration as they try to regain the political upper hand.

Faced with President Joe Biden's early popularity, good news about vaccinations, and Americans' embrace of the COVID relief bill Washington Republicans opposed, the GOP is leaning in on the highly charged issue amid a spike in border crossings. They hope immigration can unite the party heading into next year's elections, when control of Congress is at stake.

"Heading into the midterms, I think that Republicans are increasingly realizing that this can be one of the most potent issues, both to motivate our voters, but equally as important, to appeal to" swing voters—especially in suburban swing districts—who voted for Democrats in 2020, said former Trump aide Stephen Miller, the architect of his immigration policies. He said the issue has been a subject of discussion in his recent conversations with lawmakers as child border crossings have surged, straining U.S. facilities.

The situation at the Southern border is complex. Since Biden's inauguration, the country has seen a dramatic spike in the number of people encountered by border officials, with 18,945 family members and 9,297 unaccompanied children encountered in February—an increase of 168% and 63% from the month before, according to the Pew Research Center. That creates an enormous logistical challenge, since children, in particular, require higher standards of care and coordination across agencies.

Still, the encounters of both unaccompanied minors and families remain lower than at various points during the Trump administration, including in spring 2019. That May, authorities encountered more than 55,000 migrant children, including 11,500 unaccompanied minors, and around 84,500 migrants traveling in family units.

But that hasn't stopped Republicans from seizing on the issue, led by Trump himself. They blame Biden, who has been deeply critical of Trump's approach, for rolling back many of the former president's hardline deterrence policies. And they liken Biden's new, kinder tone to an invitation to would-be border crossers.

2 jurors dropped from Chauvin trial after $27M settlement

MINNEAPOLIS (AP)—A judge on Wednesday dismissed two jurors who had been seated for the trial of a former Minneapolis police officer accused in George Floyd's death over concerns they had been tainted by the city's announcement of a $27 million settlement with Floyd's family.

Hennepin County Judge Peter Cahill recalled seven jurors who were seated before the settlement was announced last week, at the request of former officer Derek Chauvin's attorney, Eric Nelson. Cahill questioned each about what they knew of the settlement and whether it would affect their ability to serve.

The dismissal of only two jurors suggested the impact of the settlement on the jury pool was less than feared, likely reducing the chance of Cahill granting a defense request to delay the trial. The judge has set March 29 for opening statements if jury selection is finished by then.

Cahill was careful to ask jurors if they had heard about the settlement without giving details, including whether they'd been exposed to the "extensive media coverage about developments in a civil suit between the city of Minneapolis and the family of George Floyd."

The first dismissed juror, a white man in his 30s, said he heard about the settlement and that he thought it would be "hard to be impartial."

"That sticker price obviously shocked me," the second dismissed juror said. The Hispanic man in his 20s said he thought he could set the news aside, but wasn't sure.

Cahill retained five other jurors, including a Black man in his 30s who said he heard about the settlement on the radio Friday evening but could decide the case on the evidence presented in the courtroom. "It hasn't affected me at all because I don't know the details," he said.

Nelson called the timing of the announcement in the middle of jury selection "profoundly disturbing" and "not fair."

Two additional jurors were chosen Wednesday, bringing the total back to nine. There are five men and four women. Five are white, one is multiracial and three are Black, and their ages range from their 20s to 50s. Fourteen jurors, including two alternates, are needed.

The newest jurors are a Black man in his 40s who said he works in management and has lived in the Twin Cities area for about two decades after immigrating to America, and a white woman in her 40s, who works as a consultant helping companies work through transitions.

The man said he had a neutral view of Chauvin, and could start with a presumption of innocence. He said he trusts police, but that it would be fair for a jury to evaluate the officer's actions.

The woman said she agreed that police don't always treat white and Black people equally, but that she has a pretty strong faith in police in her community. She said it's important for people to cooperate with police.

"I've probably been taught or learned along the way that you respect police and you do what they ask," she said.

Asia

N. Korea ignores US offer for talks, citing hostility

SEOUL, South Korea (AP)—North Korea said Thursday it will ignore a U.S. offer for talks unless it withdraws its hostile policy, after Washington reached out to Pyongyang in a bid to resume nuclear negotiations.

The statement by Choe Son Hui, the first vice foreign minister, came hours before the U.S. and South Korean foreign and defense chiefs met in Seoul for their first joint talks in five years to discuss North Korea's nuclear program.

"What has been heard from the U.S. since the emergence of the new regime is only a lunatic theory of 'threat from North Korea' and groundless rhetoric about 'complete denuclearization,'" Choe said, calling the offer for talks a "time-delaying trick."

He reiterated North Korea's position that no "dialogue of any kind" can be possible unless the United States rolls back its hostility. "Therefore, we will disregard such an attempt of the U.S. in the future, too."

U.S.-led diplomacy focusing on North Korea's nuclear weapons remains stalemated for about two years because of disputes over U.S.-led sanctions. Experts are debating whether the United States and its allies should settle for a deal that would freeze North Korea's nuclear activities in return for relaxing sanctions to prevent its arsenal from growing.

AP

U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken, left, meets South Korean Foreign Minister Chung Eui-yong prior to the Foreign and Defense Ministerial Meeting between South Korea and U.S. at the Foreign Ministry in Seoul, South Korea, Thursday, March 18, 2021.

Earlier this week, the powerful sister of North Korean leader Kim Jong Un threatened to abandon rapprochement with South Korea and warned the United States to "refrain from causing a stink," while criticizing regular U.S.-South Korean military drills that her government views as an invasion rehearsal.

Choe again took issue with this month's drills, saying that the United States "openly started aggression-minded joint military exercises targeting us."

Some experts say North Korea, which is eager to win sanctions relief, may further raise animosities with missile tests to boost its leverage in any negotiations with the United States. North Korea's moribund economy is under additional pressure because of the pandemic-related border closure that has significantly shrunk its external trade and a spate of natural disasters last summer.

Moon Hong-sik, a deputy spokesman at South Korea's Defense Ministry, told reporters Thursday there haven't been any unusual missile activities in North Korea. The

Japanese regulators say TEPCO nuclear plant prone to attack

TOKYO (AP)—Japanese nuclear regulators said Wednesday that the world's largest nuclear power plant, owned by the utility behind the Fukushima nuclear crisis, will not restart anytime soon due to serious holes in the anti-terrorism measures found at the facility.

The Nuclear Regulation Authority at its weekly meeting decided to suspend further safety inspection and other processes for a restart of the No. 7 reactor at the Kashiwazaki-Kariwa nuclear power plant on the northern Japanese coast in Niigata prefecture. The plant is owned by the Tokyo Electric Power Co.

Regulators recently found malfunctioning equipment for anti-terrorism measures and nuclear materials protection at multiple locations at the plant dating back at least until last March, according to the authority's chairman, Toyoshi Fuketa. He said officials are also investigating the security measure before that.

Fuketa, summoned to a parliamentary session Wednesday, said any step leading to a reactor restart at the plant will be suspended "for at least one year or even longer."

The authority provisionally gave the plant's nuclear security a "red" status, the worst out of four potential ratings, meaning its organizational management had deteriorated to levels that could allow intruders.

The case has raised question if TEPCO has learned any lessons from the 2011 Fukushima disaster, which was spawned by a massive earthquake and tsunami but its full impact largely attributed to the utility's lack of safety culture.

Critics say the plant requires higher security because its located on the coast facing North Korea.

The plant was partially damaged in a 2007 earthquake, causing mistrust among local municipalities. The plant has been offline since 2012. Of the 54 nuclear reactors Japan used to have, nine have restarted under post-Fukushima safety standards and four of them are currently operating.

Wednesday's decision comes as TEPCO was making final preparations toward restarting the plant after regulators granted safety approval for its No. 6 and No. 7 reactors in 2017.

TEPCO acknowledged in January that there was an unauthorized use of an identification card by a worker to enter sensitive areas at the Kashiwazaki-Kariwa plant last September, along with several necessary key safety measures that remained incomplete.

TEPCO's president, Tomoaki Kobayakawa, also summoned to parliament on Wednesday, apologized over the problem and for causing safety concerns to the public.

Restarting of the two reactors at the Kashiwazaki-Kariwa plant is considered crucial for TEPCO to reduce its financial burden to pay for the damages caused by the Fukushima disaster.

World

LEBANON PRESIDENT TO PM DESIGNATE:

'Form Cabinet now or quit'

BEIRUT (AP)—Lebanon's president called Wednesday on the prime minister-designate to form a government immediately or step aside as the country plunges deeper into economic crisis.

In turn, Prime Minister-designate Saad Hariri swiftly challenged President Michel Aoun to step down—a sign of a prolonged political crisis.

The intractable political battle comes against the backdrop of an economic crash that is proving to be the most serious challenge to the small country's stability since its 15-year civil war ended in 1990.

In a televised statement Wednesday, Aoun said that Cabinet lists proposed by Hariri, who was named to the post of premier last October, did not meet the minimum requirements needed to preserve national accord.

Aoun urged Hariri to meet him at the presidential palace and work together on forming a government or step aside if they cannot agree. The call seems an attempt to deflect blame for months-long political battle in which both sides have traded accusations of obstruction.

In response, Hariri tweeted that he was surprised by the president's televised invitation and instead urged Aoun to approve Hariri's last list, which he described as consisting of experts and not political nominees.

Hariri also called on Aoun to spare the Lebanese more suffering by allowing early presidential elections, and challenging him to spell out why he has so far declined all Cabinets proposed by the premier-designate.

Aoun was elected to a six-year term by parliament in 2016, after Lebanon had been nearly two years without a president. He is an ally of the Iran-backed Hezbollah group. Hariri, who has worked closely with Hezbollah before, is locked in a power struggle with Aoun's political party and is under pressure to exclude Hezbollah from a future Cabinet.

Underscoring Lebanon's complicated balancing act, Hezbollah says it backs Hariri—even as he loses international support amid frustration over the stalemate.

Legally, a president cannot dismiss a premier-designate, chosen by Parliament. It is unclear what would break the stalemate. According to the constitution, the president could suggest names to the prime minister-designate, who is ultimately responsible for forming a Cabinet.

"Shock after shock, each day brings its burdens and worries, and the concern grows because of the inability to have the simplest means for an honorable life," Aoun said.

Amid the political blame-trading, Lebanon's local currency continues to crash, losing over 90% of its value since October 2019. The economic crisis has pushed nearly half the population into poverty.

Banks have imposed informal controls on people's savings, and the Central Bank's foreign reserves are dwindling in a country dependent on imports of over 80% of its basic needs. Desperate and enraged, Lebanese protesters have turned to the streets to demand a way out of the crisis as prices soar and goods disappear from the market.

Ex-Vatican altar boy testifies in seminary sex abuse trial

ROME (AP)—A former Vatican altar boy has testified that an older seminarian would come into his bed at night to perform a sexual act on him in the Vatican's youth seminary, saying his initial shock gave way to resignation because he feared being sent home.

Accuser L.G. testified for the first time Wednesday in the Vatican's criminal courtroom, in the first-ever case to go to trial alleging sexual abuse within the Vatican walls—among the altar boys who serve at papal Masses in St. Peter's Basilica.

The Rev. Gabriele Martinelli is accused of abusing his authority as a more senior seminarian to force L.G. into "carnal acts" of sodomy and masturbation, using violence and threats, from 2007-2012. The former rector of the seminary, the Rev. Enrico Radice, is charged with having helped Martinelli avoid investigators by discrediting L.G.'s allegations as baseless.

Martinelli has denied he molested L.G., saying the allegations were unfounded, implausible and the fruit of "jealousy" because he was eventually ordained a priest. Radice has denied knowing anything about abuse, or impeding the probe.

The St. Pius X seminary, in a palazzo inside the Vatican gardens, houses boys aged 12-18 who serve as altar boys at papal Masses. The scandal erupted in 2017 when former altar boys went public with allegations of misconduct by Martinelli and cover-up by the seminary superiors.

In previous hearings, former seminarians have described a toxic, homophobic atmosphere in the closed world of the seminary, where some boys were bullied and the priest superiors did little to protect them.

During three hours of testimony Wednesday, L.G., said Martinelli first began molesting him a few months after he arrived in the seminary in 2006 as a 13-year-old from a small town in northern Italy. He testified it was his first sexual experience, and that it was a "shock" that he didn't understand and that he felt "paralyzed."

"Martinelli would slip into my bed at night," he testified. "For me it was a very strange thing: I was young and I had never entered into the world of sexuality. At home or in my town, I had never heard of sex. I felt a sense of confusion, I didn't understand what was happening."

He said he eventually resigned himself to Martinelli, and that he experienced a sense of disassociation from his body when Martinelli, who was seven months older and a more senior seminarian, would touch him. He said he tried to bang on the walls or slam drawers to make him go away, and that his roommates either slept through the commotion or pretended to.

He testified that he told the rector, Radice, in 2009 that Martinelli was bothering him, but admitted that he didn't provide details. He said Radice told him he was just jealous, and warned him to stop or he would tell his parents and parish priest and send him home.

"As a 30-year-old I feel guilty that I hadn't been clearer," L.G. said.

Off The Wall

Baby bottle craze sweeps Gulf Arab states, sparks backlash

DUBAI, United Arab Emirates (AP)—Cafes across several Gulf Arab states started selling coffee and other cold drinks in baby bottles this month, kicking off a new trend that has elicited excitement, confusion—and backlash.

The fad began at Einstein Cafe, a slick dessert chain with branches across the region, from Dubai to Kuwait to Bahrain. Instead of ordinary paper cups, the cafe, inspired by pictures of trendy-looking bottles shared on social media, decided to serve its thick milky drinks in plastic baby bottles.

A waiter poses with a tray of baby bottles that he brought out from storage, at Einstein Cafe in Dubai, United Arab Emirates, Sunday, March 14, 2021.

AP PHOTO/KAMRAN JEBREILI

Although the franchise was no newcomer to baby-themed products—a milkshake with cerelac, the rice cereal for infants, is a long-standing best-seller—the unprecedented fervor over the feeding bottles came as a bit of a shock. All the stress and anxiety over the coronavirus pandemic appears to have spurred some to find an outlet in the strange new craze.

"Everyone wanted to buy it, people called all day, telling us they're coming with their friends, they're coming with their father and mother," Younes Molla, CEO of the Einstein franchise in the United Arab Emirates, told The Associated Press this week. "After so many months with the pandemic, with all the difficulties, people took photos, they had fun, they remembered their childhood."

Lines clogged Einstein stores across the Gulf. People of all ages streamed onto sidewalks, waiting for their chance to suck coffee and juice from a plastic bottle. Some patrons even brought their own baby bottles to other cafes, pleading with bewildered baristas to fill them up.

Pictures of baby bottles filled with colorful kaleidoscopes of drinks drew thousands of likes on Instagram and ricocheted across the popular social media app TikTok. A cure for the world's uncertainty? A response to some primal instinct? Either way, a trend was born.

Soon, however, online haters took note—the baby bottle drinkers and providers faced a barrage of nasty comments.

"People were so angry, they said horrible things, that we were an 'aeb,' to Islam and the Muslim culture," said Molla, using the Arabic term for shame or dishonor.

Last week, the anger reached the highest levels of government. Dubai authorities cracked down. Inspection teams burst into cafes where the trend had taken off and handed out fines.

"Such indiscriminate use of baby bottles is not only against local culture and traditions," read the government statement, "but the mishandling of the bottle during the filling could also contribute to the spread of COVID-19," an apparent reference to those bringing their used bottles to other cafes.

Authorities, the statement added, had been "alerted to the negative practice and its risks by social media users."

Backlash also came from Kuwait, where the government temporarily shut down Einstein Cafe, and from Bahrain, where the Ministry of Commerce sent police armed with live cameras into cafes and warned all dining establishments that serving drinks in feeding bottles "violates Bahraini customs and traditions."

Oman urged citizens to report baby bottle sightings to the Consumer Protection Authority hotline. Saudi Twitter users and media personalities condemned the trend in the harshest terms, with popular news website Mujaz al-Akhbar lamenting that the kingdom's "daughters have suffered from a loss of modesty and religion."

Naked Cowboy gets hero's welcome after arrest

DAYTONA BEACH, Fla. (AP)—Attendees at Bike Week in Daytona Beach gave a hero's welcome to a Times Square performer known as the Naked Cowboy after he returned to the motorcycle festival almost a week after his arrest on a misdemeanor charge of resisting arrest without violence and violating a panhandling ordinance.

"He's out! He's out!" a motorcyclist shouted as he cruised along on Main Street. Other bikers honked horns and offered a thumbs-up as Robert Burck strolled along the sidewalk, wearing his trademark briefs, cowboy boots, cowboy hat and guitar, according to the Daytona Beach News-Journal.

Burck, 51, who became well-known as a performer in New York City's Times Square, said he felt like singer Michael Jackson making a public appearance during the height of his fame in the 1980s.

"You know, how any time he'd step out onto the street there would be a thousand people following him everywhere?" Burck said. "Obviously, people are really celebrating the fact that I'm here."

After spending the night in jail last weekend, Burck entered a plea of no contest to the misdemeanor charge of resisting arrest without violence at his first appearance last Sunday at the Volusia County Branch Jail courtroom.

A judge withheld adjudication on the resisting arrest charge, meaning it won't go down as a conviction on Burck's record, and the jurist sentenced him to time served. The judge then dismissed the misdemeanor charge of panhandling.

Fans of the Naked Cowboy in Daytona Beach said Friday they were excited to see him back performing during Bike Week, and many lined up to take selfies with him. Burck's previous guitar was damaged during a scuffle with an officer during his arrest last weekend, but a local music store donated a replacement guitar.

"This is the first time I've seen him this up-close and personal," said Dana Shimer, 66, a Bike Week visitor from Pennsylvania. "I'm so excited to get to hug him."

Science & Technology

Endangered birds lose their songs, unable to find mates

WASHINGTON (AP)—Male songbirds usually learn their tunes from adult mentors. But when aspiring crooners lack proper role models, they hit all the wrong notes—and have less success attracting mates.

This 2016 photo provided by Murray Chambers shows a male regent honeyeater bird in Capertee Valley in New South Wales, Australia.

MURRAY CHAMBERS VIA AP

For five years, ecologist Ross Crates has tracked the singing ability and breeding success of critically endangered regent honeyeaters. These distinctive black and yellow birds were once common across Australia, but habitat loss since the 1950s has shrunk their population to only about 300 or 400 wild birds today.

While male birds once formed large winter flocks, now they are sparsely distributed across the landscape, so many fly solo. That means fewer honeyeater mentors are nearby during young birds' impressionable first year.

Colors, highlighting can make Windows 10 easier to see

Q: Windows 10 has some color issues that make it hard for me to see things on the screen. My son says my best option is to use "High Contrast," which changes the screen colors to make them more discernible, but I don't find it that useful. I also have a hard time seeing highlighted items in programs such as Microsoft's Excel spreadsheet. What can I do?

A: You may be dealing with two different visual issues: High-contrast screen colors (that are supposed to improve screen visibility) and highlighting (which identifies the file or text you're working with.) Both can be improved.

The Windows 10 High Contrast feature rearranges the screen's color scheme to make it easier to distinguish between objects. The idea is to make it easier to navigate the screen and to improve the visibility of ordinary text, hyperlinks or text that you've "defined" so that you can copy, change or delete it.

But if you don't care for the preset color combinations Microsoft offers you (they are called "themes"), you can customize the color combinations to suit your vision needs (see tinyurl.com/39c8e97x).

Or, if you think High Contrast doesn't help much, there's an alternate way to change screen colors. The Windows 10 Color Filters (see tinyurl.com/tst4y4vw) can modify screen colors or compensate for different types of color blindness.

Highlighting is a key part of Windows. It can help you see a file you want to open, text you want to modify or text that's more easily viewed in a different color scheme.

But highlighting sometimes stops working if you magnify text on the screen to 125% of original size (a reasonable thing to do if you have vision issues.) Highlighting also can fail after a Windows 10 update or when the PC "awakens" from the power-saving "sleep" or "hibernate" modes.

In many of these cases, the cause of highlighting failures is a PC graphics card that is using outdated software. Try updating the card's firmware (instructions that are stored on the card) and software driver (used to control a PC's separate devices, such as a graphics card.)

Both should be available for free from the graphics card manufacturer. To find out which company made your PC's graphics card, search Google for a review of your PC model — reviews usually identify the graphics card. Then search that firm's website for updates.

Q: Can you recommend a smartphone headset that's comfortable and has clear sound?

A: I don't recommend brands, but here are some choices:

■ Headphones or earbuds (that fit in your ear). At home, it probably doesn't matter. If you are outside, headphones probably won't fit in your pocket, but earbuds will.

■ Wired vs. wireless. Wireless models are more convenient, but the earbuds typically need recharging every five to 11 hours and the headphones every 20 to 30 hours. (For a sample of wired and wireless devices, see tinyurl.com/4xja52jh.)

■ Whether to buy a device with built-in noise-cancellation technology. It blocks some noise around you to improve the sound of headphones or earbuds (see tinyurl.com/2df2hamw).

TECH Q&A

By STEVE ALEXANDER
Star Tribune

Steve Alexander covers technology for the Star Tribune *of Minneapolis. Readers may write to him at Tech Q&A, 425 Portland Ave. S., Minneapolis, Minn. 55488-0002; email: steve.j.alexander@gmail.com. Please include a full name, city and phone number.)*

Life & Style

15th century bowl found at yard sale sells for $722,000

HARTFORD, Conn. (AP)—An exceptionally rare 15th century porcelain bowl made in China that somehow turned up at a Connecticut yard sale and sold for just $35 was auctioned off Wednesday for nearly $722,000.

The small white bowl adorned with cobalt blue paintings of flowers and other designs—one of only seven such bowls known to exist in the world—was among a variety of Chinese works of art sold by Sotheby's as part of its Asia Week events. The names of the seller and buyer were not disclosed.

Sotheby's had estimated the value of the artifact at $300,000 to $500,000. Wednesday's auction included 15 bids, starting at $200,000 from someone online and ending at $580,000 from another person bidding by phone. The official purchase price, which included various fees, was $721,800.

An antiques enthusiast came across the Ming Dynasty-era piece and thought it could be something special when browsing a yard sale in the New Haven area last year, according to Sotheby's. The buyer later emailed information and photos to Sotheby's asking for an evaluation.

"Today's result for this exceptionally rare floral bowl, dating to the 15th century, epitomizes the incredible, once in a lifetime discovery stories that we dream about as specialists in the Chinese Art field," Angela McAteer, head of Sotheby's Chinese Works of Art Department, said in a statement.

Sotheby's confirmed it was from the 1400s when they were able to look at it in person—there are no scientific tests, only the trained eyes and hands of specialists. The bowl was very smooth to the touch, its glaze was silky and the color and designs are distinctive of the period.

The bowl dates back to the early 1400s during the reign of the Yongle Emperor, the third ruler of the Ming Dynasty, and was made for the Yongle court. The Yongle court was known to have ushered in a new style to the porcelain kilns in the city of Jingdezhen, and the bowl is a quintessential Yongle product, according to Sotheby's.

The bowl was made in the shape of a lotus bud or chicken heart. Inside, it is decorated with a medallion at the bottom and a quatrefoil motif surrounded by flowers. The outside includes four blossoms of lotus, peony, chrysanthemum and pomegranate flower. There are also intricate patterns at the top of both the outside and inside.

McAteer said only six other such bowls are known to exist, and most of them are in museums. No others are in the United States. There are two at the National Palace Museum in Taipei, Taiwan, two at museums in London and one in the National Museum of Iran in Tehran, according to Sotheby's.

Fueled by fans, 'Zack Snyder's Justice League' hits HBO Max

Zack Snyder never really believed that his cut of "Justice League" would see the light of day. It has technically existed since January 2017, but it wasn't in any shape to be released. It was four hours, in black and white, had storyboards where visual effects were supposed to go and an unfinished score.

"When I finished it, I said, oh well, no one will ever see this movie," he said.

Although he's officially credited as the director of the DC superhero mashup with Gal Gadot's Wonder Woman, Ben Affleck's Batman and Jason Momoa's Aquaman that hit theaters in the summer of 2017, he and Deborah Snyder—his wife and producing partner—had stepped away from the film months earlier. Relations had strained with the studio, and the pressure was getting to be too much, especially after the suicide of their 20-year-old daughter Autumn. So the Snyders walked away, and Joss Whedon was hired to revamp and finish "Justice League." The result was both a critical and financial letdown, and, according to cast members like Ray Fisher, who plays Cyborg, a toxic environment too.

The Snyders had mostly disconnected from the whole ordeal, but fans wouldn't stop asking for The Snyder Cut. And their gestures kept getting more and more elaborate: Planes with #ReleasetheSnyderCut banners were flown over the Warner Bros. lot in Burbank and during the 2019 San Diego Comic-Con. They even leased a billboard in Time's Square. Over the years, the hashtag became so ubiquitous, it even turned into a bit of a joke. Why on earth would a studio pay for a redo of an epic disaster?

Well, a few things happened: There was a change of leadership at the studio and suddenly everyone was in search of content for their new streaming service HBO Max. Warner Bros. Pictures Group chair Toby Emmerich asked the Snyders if they could release what they had.

"We were like, it's really rough," Deborah Snyder said.

HBO MAX VIA AP

This image released by HBO Max shows, from left, Jason Momoa as Aquaman, Gal Gadot as Wonder Woman, and Ray Fisher as Cyborg, in a scene from "Zack Snyder's Justice League."

But they saw an opportunity to finish what they started, and she got to work putting together a pitch. It was somewhat familiar territory for the former advertising executive but also in many ways entirely unprecedented.

"I think the biggest challenge was to convince HBO Max that it was worth the money to do it...at the end of the day, for them, it's a business deal. And they if they're going to spend X, they want to make sure they're getting a return on that business," she said. "And with a movie that had already come out we needed to also show everyone that this was a different animal. This wasn't the same thing."

The fans were a crucial component. For HBO Max, it meant possible subscriptions. And the Snyders got the go-ahead to finish the score, add some 2,650 visual effects and film an additional scene with Jared Leto's Joker. It even proved beneficial that everything shut down because of COVID: It freed up the visual effects houses that are usually booked up years in advance.

The result, "Zack Snyder's Justice League," debuts on HBO Max on Thursday. It's not just a director's cut. It's a whole new movie. And, it seems, even critics have gotten on board. As of Wednesday, it was sitting at 78% on Rotten Tomatoes—a vast improvement over the original's 40%.

"It's the journey of the team coming together. To be able to explore each member of that team and who they are and what their struggles are in this format? We wouldn't have been able to do that (for theaters)," Deborah Snyder said. "Now we really get this really immersive journey that we get to go on with the characters. And I think at the end it's more fulfilling. We care about them more because you see where they've come from."

Cruelties of the past linger in relationship with stepmom

DEAR ABBY: For more than four decades, my stepmother, "Vera," and I never got along. We tolerated each other for the sake of my father, who has now passed away. I'm a 60-year-old male reader and unsure how to respond to some recent statements she has been making.

For the record, I and many others always found Vera to be extremely self-absorbed and lacking in empathy. She often treated my father unkindly, bordering on abusive before and during his slow decline with dementia, even though she never had to provide any hands-on care. Yes, I know it's hard to always be patient in these cases, but Dad was never "difficult" or violent—just forgetful.

I call and visit Vera (who is now 87) occasionally, out of a sense of duty. A few times she has mentioned the unkind things she said or did to my father, not expressing remorse but possibly feeling some guilt.

Thus far, I have ignored these remarks, though I want to let her know I felt sad and angry about how she acted and could never live with myself if I'd treated my seriously ill spouse that way. Should I keep letting it go or express how I really feel?

GRIEVING SON IN THE WEST

DEAR SON: The next time Vera mentions the unkind things she said or did to your dad, feel free to speak up and let her know that not only did you notice but also how you feel about it. Frankly, it is admirable that you check in on the woman at all considering how you felt about each other all those years. I don't think most people would do as much as you have done under similar circumstances.

DEAR ABBY: I have two wonderful grandparents I love very much. They are the most important people in my life, and I always think about them when planning anything in my life because I want to make them happy.

The problem is I want to go to college out of state and pursue a career that isn't possible in the city or state they live in. They want me to live with them in a city I can't be happy in because of this.

How do I tell them I can't see myself staying there for the rest of my life? I know they won't be happy hearing it, but I don't want to disappoint them or make them think I don't love them anymore by leaving. Please help. I don't know what to do or what path in life to take.

AT A CROSSROADS IN TEXAS

DEAR AT A CROSSROADS: You ARE at a crossroads. You're standing in the intersection of adolescence and adulthood. You deserve the chance to fulfill your dreams, so it's time for an adult conversation with your grandparents. Explain that you love them and don't want to disappoint them, and outline what your plans are regarding your education and your career. While they may be disappointed, if they love you as much as you love them, they won't stand in your way.

Abby shares more than 100 of her favorite recipes in two booklets: "Abby's Favorite Recipes" and "More Favorite Recipes by Dear Abby." Send your name and mailing address, plus check or money order for $16 (U.S. funds) to: Dear Abby, Cookbooklet Set, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. (Shipping and handling are included in the price.)

DEAR ABBY

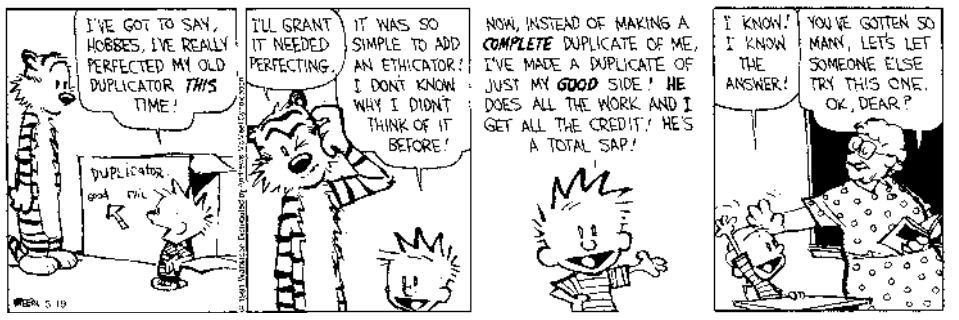
By ABIGAIL VAN BUREN
UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE

Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Contact Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

Pastimes

Calvin and Hobbes

By Bill Waterson


I'VE GOT TO SAY, HOBBES, I'VE REALLY PERFECTED MY OLD DUPLICATOR THIS TIME!
DUPLICATOR
I'LL GRANT IT NEEDED PERFECTING.
IT WAS SO SIMPLE TO ADD AN ETHICATOR! I DON'T KNOW WHY I DIDN'T THINK OF IT BEFORE!
NOW, INSTEAD OF MAKING A COMPLETE DUPLICATE OF ME, I'VE MADE A DUPLICATE OF JUST MY GOOD SIDE! HE DOES ALL THE WORK AND I GET ALL THE CREDIT! HE'S A TOTAL SAP!
I KNOW! I KNOW THE ANSWER!
YOU'VE GOTTEN SO MANY, LET'S LET SOMEONE ELSE TRY THIS ONE. OK, DEAR?

Garfield®

By Jim Davis

Adam@home

By Bryan Basset

THIS GAME IS CALLED "HYPEREXTENDED KNEE." IS THAT LITERAL OR A METAPHOR?
I DON'T KNOW! YOU TELL ME!
HERE GOES NOTHING.
SIP
AAAA!!! OH! OH, NO!! GAAH!!
WHAT?? IS IT THAT INTENSE!?
NO, NO. MY COFFEE WAS COLD.

The Duplex

By Glenn McCoy

YOU'VE BEEN LIFTING THAT WEIGHT THE SAME NUMBER OF TIMES FOR MONTHS.
IT'S TIME FOR YOU TO GO UP IN REPETITIONS.
ONE... TWO!
BETTER.
TRAINER

CROSSWORD

By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS

1 River blocker
4 Nevada city
8 Flag feature
12 "Where did — wrong?"
13 Baseball's Moises
14 Fade away
15 Get the better of
17 Author Bagnold
18 Wicker material
19 Napkin's place
21 Peculiar
22 Not passive
26 Eucalyptus muncher
29 Letter addenda, for short
30 Standard
31 Sea flier
32 Corpulent
33 Nightclub of song
34 Actor Stephen
35 Chess piece
36 Factions
37 "Nothing for me, thanks"
39 Coffee holder
40 Shock partner
41 Obliterates
45 Pride parade initials
48 Have food delivered
50 "Nope!"
51 "Les États- —"
52 Gun lobby org.
53 Bands' bookings
54 Diplomacy
55 Cry

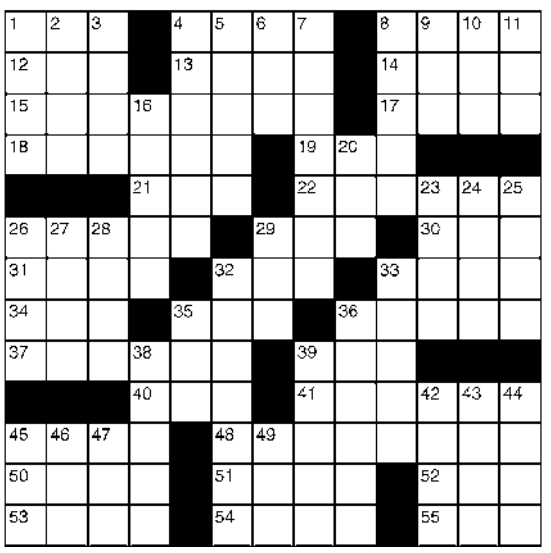
DOWN

1 French perfume brand
2 Water, in Mexico
3 Abolitionist Lucretia
4 Holiday Inn rival
5 Serengeti antelope
6 Neither here — there
7 Endure longer than
8 Used a broom
9 Light brown
10 Blackbird
11 Flushed
16 Stylish wrap
20 Rm. coolers
23 Apple product
24 Smoke an e-cig
25 Eventful periods
26 Russell of "Waitress"
27 Utah city
28 Scrambled wd.
29 Skillet
32 Disappear gradually
33 Humidor item
35 Trim the grass
36 Most certain
38 Solemn promises
39 Army doc
42 "— and Lovers" (D.H. Lawrence novel)
43 Modern money
44 Wild guess
45 Schlep
46 4, on a phone
47 Glitch
49 Genetic letters

Solution time: 25 mins.

C	A	R	D	■	O	M	A	R	■	H	O	N
O	P	E	R	■	R	O	M	A	■	E	G	O
H	E	M	I	N	G	W	A	Y	■	M	E	D
O	X	I	D	E	S	■	■	O	G	L	E	S
■	■	■	L	O	■	S	I	N	A	I	■	■
A	C	H	E	■	D	A	D	■	S	N	U	G
F	O	E	■	■	E	L	O	■	■	E	A	P
T	O	M	B	■	A	L	S	■	S	S	R	S
■	■	P	E	O	N	Y	■	Y	E	■	■	■
U	N	M	E	T	■	■	P	E	T	A	L	S
R	O	I	■	H	E	M	S	W	O	R	T	H
S	N	L	■	E	R	O	S	■	U	N	D	O
A	C	K	■	H	A	P	I	■	I	E	S	I

Yesterday's answer 3-19



STUMPED? For answers to today's crossword, call **1-900-226-5955**! 99¢ per minute, touch-tone/rotary phones. (18+ only.) A King Features service, NYC.

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: AJ Lee, 34; Bruce Willis, 66; Glenn Close, 74; Ursula Andress, 85.

Happy Birthday: Gather information. Sign up for courses that encourage personal growth, better health or mastering a skill that leads to a vocation that's in demand. Think outside the box, and your hard work and innovative approach to survival will pay off. Let emotions and frustrations fuel your desire to be successful instead of turning you into a victim. Your numbers are 3, 13, 18, 20, 29, 26, 42.

ARIES *(March 21-April 19):* Getting all worked up won't solve anything. Take a deep breath, and consider what you can do to make a difference. Positive action is required if you want to move forward mentally, financially and emotionally. Offer peace and love, not discord. ✪✪✪✪

TAURUS *(April 20-May 20):* Your best bet is to carry on with your responsibilities, regardless of what others decide to do. Today is about what you accomplish, not convincing others to do things your way. Tidy up business and focus on love, romance and personal improvements. ✪✪✪

GEMINI *(May 21-June 20):* Stretch your imagination, but don't let gullibility be your downfall. Look for opportunities to show off what you have to offer without giving someone the chance to take over or steal your ideas. Protect and proceed, and progress will unfold. ✪✪✪

CANCER *(June 21-July 22):* Complete your responsibilities, and move on to pastimes that encourage you to relax and enjoy the people you love most. Refuse to let anyone back you into a corner or push you into an emotional argument. Invest in personal goals and physical appearance. ✪✪✪

LEO *(July 23-Aug. 22):* Associate with people who have as much to offer as you do. Strive for equality at work, and don't feel you have to pick up and follow someone you don't agree with or like. Look for opportunities you can pursue alone. ✪✪✪✪

VIRGO *(Aug. 23-Sept. 22):* If you don't like a situation you encounter, step away. Your happiness is up to you, so make a point to surround yourself with people who bring out the best in you. Invest time and money in yourself. ✪✪

LIBRA *(Sept. 23-Oct. 22):* Learn all you can; follow a path that's in your best interest. Use your skills to improve your lifestyle and your relationships with others. Home improvements should make your life better, not more stressful. Don't overspend. ✪✪✪✪✪

SCORPIO *(Oct. 23-Nov. 21):* Think matters through and make changes that will help you put an end to uncertainty. It's time to focus on what's possible and look for creative ways to build a life that offers you peace of mind. Personal growth is favored. ✪✪✪

SAGITTARIUS *(Nov. 22-Dec. 21):* Look at every angle. Don't promise anything you cannot deliver. Refuse to let emotional manipulation dictate what you can do. Stick to a plan that works for you, regardless of what others want you to do. Choose moderation over excess. ✪✪✪

EUGENIA LAST

THE LAST WORD IN ASTROLOGY

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CAPRICORN *(Dec. 22-Jan. 19):* Stand up for your beliefs. Offer insight, hope and help to people who are open to turning over a new leaf. Walk away from emotionally draining situations, and bring about the changes that will encourage relationships with positive people. ✪✪✪

AQUARIUS *(Jan. 20-Feb. 18):* Listen and learn. Don't take part in conversations that will promote more harm than good. Positive suggestions and follow-up will make a statement about the kind of person you are and what you are willing to do. ✪✪✪✪✪

PISCES *(Feb. 19-March 20):* Keep your mind on what's important. Be responsible, and finish what you start. Keep your cool, and refuse to get into an argument. Putting your energy where it counts will bring you the highest return. Celebrate life with someone you love. ✪✪

Birthday Baby: You are forceful, impulsive and persuasive. You are smart and persistent.

✪: Avoid conflicts; work behind the scenes. ✪✪: You can accomplish, but don't rely on others. ✪✪✪: Focus and you'll reach your goals. ✪✪✪✪: Aim high; start new projects. ✪✪✪✪✪: Nothing can stop you; go for gold.

SUDOKU

Conceptis Sudoku *By Dave Green*

		9			6		
	8	6		1			
	7			5		8		2
3							
	9	2				5	3	
								7
9		7		2			4	
				8		1	7	
		5			4			

Difficulty Level ★★★★ 3/19

Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Saturday.

Yesterday's Answer

8	5	7	6	1	2	4	3	9
9	1	2	7	4	3	5	8	6
4	6	3	9	5	8	2	1	7
2	8	5	3	7	6	9	4	1
1	7	9	4	2	5	8	6	3
6	3	4	8	9	1	7	5	2
3	4	8	2	6	9	1	7	5
5	9	6	1	8	7	3	2	4
7	2	1	5	3	4	6	9	8

Difficulty Level ★★★★

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WONDERWORD®

By DAVID OUELLET

HOW TO PLAY: All the words listed below appear in the puzzle — horizontally, vertically, diagonally and even backward. Find them, circle each letter of the word and strike it off the list. The leftover letters spell the **WONDERWORD.**

A PITCHER OF... **Solution: 7 letters**

D	M	S	R	A	S	E	A	C	S	H	C	A	E	P
N	E	A	S	E	G	A	R	E	V	E	B	O	A	E
A	O	T	R	N	M	H	S	S	C	E	R	R	L	F
H	A	L	A	T	O	I	F	F	E	T	S	V	A	A
C	S	R	E	N	I	R	L	R	L	L	P	Ⓜ	E	R
U	O	L	E	M	O	N	A	D	E	A	A	Ⓘ	J	A
B	M	Y	D	Z	R	B	I	Y	R	S	S	Ⓛ	U	C
M	I	N	E	E	E	E	R	S	Y	T	S	Ⓚ	I	I
O	M	N	D	G	L	G	T	A	M	R	R	N	C	T
K	T	W	R	I	T	L	L	A	C	A	F	J	E	S
R	O	I	Q	U	T	P	I	A	W	U	E	A	U	A
P	E	U	J	B	O	O	S	T	S	Q	S	R	I	L
S	O	D	A	O	B	P	A	E	S	S	T	S	C	P
R	E	N	I	W	M	S	B	C	H	I	L	L	E	D
S	W	I	T	C	H	E	L	S	C	A	D	E	C	I

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Ales, Basil, Beer, Beverages, Boost, Bottle, Caesars, Carafe, Carbonated, Celery, Chilled, Cider, Citrus, Cola, Cream, Distilled, Flask, Frozen, Glass, Honey, Iced, Infuse, Jars, Juice, Kombucha, Lemonade, Lime, Liquor, Martinis, Milk, Mimosa, Mojito, Orange, Parsley, Pass, Peach, Plastic, Pops, Pour, Powder, Quart, Salt, Serve, Soda, Switchels, Teas, Watermelon, Wine

Yesterday's Answer: Ready

Jo's Jewels Collector's Edition is back by popular demand! Purchase online at www.WonderWordBooks.com or call 1-800-642-6480.

Antetokounmpo, Bucks outlast 76ers, 109-105, in OT

PHILADELPHIA (AP)—Giannis Antetokounmpo scored 10 of his 32 points in overtime to lead the Milwaukee Bucks to a 109-105 victory over the Philadelphia 76ers on Wednesday night in a matchup of two of the Eastern Conference's best teams.

Antetokounmpo finished with 15 rebounds and five assists, ending a streak of three straight triple-doubles. The Bucks pulled within 1 1/2 games of the East-leading 76ers.

With P.J. Tucker reportedly headed to Milwaukee in a trade with Houston, Donte DiVincenzo scored 20 points and Jrue Holiday added 19 for the Bucks. They have won five in a row and 10 of 11.

Milwaukee's D.J. Augustin and D.J. Wilson, who according to ESPN are heading to Houston in the trade, did not play. Torrey Craig, reportedly headed Phoenix in a separate deal to clear salary space for Tucker, also sat out.

Tobias Harris scored 19 points and Danny Green added 18 for Philadelphia. The 76ers had won six in a row. All-Star Joel Embiid sat for the third straight game with a bruised left knee. Ben Simmons had 13 points and 12 assists.

AP

Milwaukee Bucks' Giannis Antetokounmpo , left, goes up for a shot against Philadelphia 76ers' Ben Simmons during the second half of an NBA basketball game, Wednesday, March 17, 2021, in Philadelphia.

Nets 125, Pacers 115

In Indianapolis, James Harden had 40 points, 15 assists and 10 rebounds for his 11th triple-double of the season, leading Brooklyn past Indiana.

The Nets were without fellow All-Stars Kyrie Irving (groin) and Kevin Durant (hamstring) and newcomer Blake Griffin (knee).

Harden hit a runner in the lane to tie it at 96 early in the fourth. That started a 13-4 run that included Harden's 3-pointer and another layup that pushed it to 109-100.

Joe Harris added 19 points for the Nets, and Jeff Green and Tyler Johnson each had 15.

Malcolm Brogdon led Indiana with 24 points, and Domantas Sabonis had a triple-double with 18 points, 11 rebounds, and 11 assists.

Warriors 108, Rockets 94

In Houston, Draymond Green had 16 points, 12 rebounds and 10 assists for his third triple-double of the season and Golden State handed Houston its franchise-record 18th straight loss.

Houston's skid surpasses the 17 straight losses by the San Diego Rockets in 1968, when they went 15-67 in their first year as a franchise. It's the first time the Rockets have lost nine consecutive home games since they dropped 11 straight in 1983.

Reserve Jordan Poole scored 23 points and made a career-high six 3-pointers for the Warriors. Kevin Porter Jr. led the Rockets with 25 points.

Cavaliers 117, Celtics 110

In Cleveland, Collin Sexton scored 29 points, Darius Garland added 25 and Cleveland's young guards made big plays down the stretch to beat Boston.

The Cavs ended a four-game losing streak and a nine-game skid against Boston.

Cleveland played with a lead all night, but the Cavs had to hold off a second-half rally by Boston led by Jayson Tatum and Jaylen Brown. Tatum scored 29 points and Brown 28 for the Celtics, who lost at home to the Utah Jazz on Tuesday night.

Mavericks 105, Clippers 89

In Dallas, Luka Doncic scored 42 points and Dallas split a two-game set against its first-round playoff opponent from last season, beating Los Angeles.

Josh Richardson scored 14 points and was a defensive spark as the Mavericks answered a 109-99 loss two nights earlier and won the season series, 2-1. The other Dallas victory was by 51 points in LA three games into the season in December. The Clippers beat the Mavs in six games last summer in the NBA's playoff bubble.

Paul George had 28 points for the Clippers.

Nuggets 129, Hornets 104

In Denver, Nikola Jokic had 12 points, 10 rebounds and 10 assists for another triple-double, Michael Porter Jr. added 28 points and Denver beat Charlotte.

Jokic has 10 triple-doubles this season and 51 overall. He also had his 228th double-double to move one past Dikembe Mutumbo for the franchise record. Jokic leads the NBA in double-doubles this season with 36 in 40 games.

Will Barton scored 23 points to help the Nuggets win for the seventh time in eight games and snap Charlotte's four-game winning streak.

Terry Rozier had 21 points to lead the Hornets. LaMelo Ball had 14 points.

Grizzlies 89, Heat 85

In Memphis, Tenn., Ja Morant dribbled the length of the court for a tiebreaking layup with 1.2 seconds left to lift Memphis past Miami.

Memphis' Kyle Anderson intercepted the inbound pass after Morant's basket, was fouled and made two free throws to end Miami's winning streak at five.

Jimmy Butler was questionable to play after twisting his left ankle late in Tuesday's loss to Cleveland but led the Heat with 24 points on 10-of-20 shooting.

Kings 121, Wizards 119

In Washington, De'Aaron Fox scored 28 points and hit a jumper over Bradley Beal with 0.7 seconds remaining to give lift Sacramento over Washington.

Harrison Barnes and Richaun Holmes each added 18 points for Sacramento.

Russell Westbrook had 26 points, 14 rebounds and 10 assists—his 11th triple-double of the season—for the Wizards, and Beal scored 29 points on 12-of-20 shooting.

Spurs 106, Bulls 99

In Chicago, Jakob Poeltl tied a career high with 20 points and set one with 16 rebounds and San Antonio used a huge fourth quarter to beat Chicago.

The Spurs trailed by 23 in the second quarter and were down 58-40 after their lowest-scoring first half of the season. But they dominated Chicago 39-19 in the fourth to come away with their second straight win after losing three of four.

Zach LaVine led Chicago with 29 points.

Pistons 116, Raptors 112

In Detroit, Saddiq Bey had 28 points and 12 rebounds and Detroit overcame Norman Powell's 43 points to beat Toronto.

Bey was 6 of 10 from 3-point range. Delon Wright added 18 points, 10 rebounds and eight assists, and Jerami Grant had 23 points.

Chris Boucher added 21 points for the Raptors. They have lost six straight.

Heat trade Meyers Leonard to Thunder for Trevor Ariza

MIAMI (AP)—The Miami Heat have turned Meyers Leonard's contract into an opportunity to see if Trevor Ariza can help them for the rest of this season.

And for their trouble, the Oklahoma City Thunder got yet another draft pick.

Leonard—who had likely played his final game for the Heat, even before drawing widespread criticism for using an anti-Semitic term while livestreaming a video game last week—was traded Wednesday to the Thunder in exchange for Ariza and a second-round pick in the 2027 draft.

"Meyers was a key part of our team that made a run to the NBA Finals and we will always be grateful for his contributions and leadership last season," the Heat said in the statement announcing the trade. "His recent comments were very hurtful and disappointing, but, we are encouraged that he has spent this last week meeting with community leaders, rabbis and Holocaust survivors to greater understand the impact of his words and we hope that his education will continue."

The Heat also said they wish Leonard and his wife Elle "the best of luck in the future."

"He's going to do everything that he possibly can to grow and get better from everything this week," Heat coach Erik Spoelstra said. "We appreciate his time with us."

The Thunder have no plans to keep Leonard, and may either trade him in the coming days or simply elect to not pick up his $10.2 million option for next season. He "will not be an active member of the organization," the team said.

Ariza has not played an NBA game since March 10, 2020, but the Heat clearly felt he was worth the low-risk gamble.

Leonard needed to sign off on the trade because of his contract status and did so quickly, according to a person who was familiar with the negotiations leading up to the swap being finalized. He had been away from the Heat for more than a week after a video surfaced of him using the slur.

He apologized for the incident, which was roundly criticized by the Heat, Jewish groups, other athletes and celebrities. NBA Commissioner Adam Silver fined Leonard $50,000 and barred him from being around the Heat for one week. The team had previously said Leonard would be away from the team indefinitely.

Silver has said that he believes Leonard "is genuinely remorseful" for using the slur.

"Meyers Leonard's comment was inexcusable and hurtful and such an offensive term has no place in the NBA or in our society," Silver said last week.

Leonard's mandate from the league to participate in a cultural diversity program will remain in place. He has already met with representatives from the Anti-Defamation League, a prominent Jewish organization that works to stop extremism and delivers anti-bias education.

The second-round pick the Thunder will get is to be conveyed in 2027, and gives Oklahoma City — which has collected more than 30 picks to use over the next seven years through various other trades — four second-rounders in that year's draft alone.

The Heat will get to add wing depth for the second consecutive season through a trade for a player who had been sitting out for months. They did it last year as part of a trade with Memphis that brought Andre Iguodala to Miami, and now do it with Ariza — who was part of three trades in a six-day span this past November and ended up with Oklahoma City, though has never played for the Thunder.

The 35-year-old Ariza was born in Miami, has been working out in Miami of late and is about to make the Heat the 10th team that he has played for in 17 seasons—not even including Detroit and Oklahoma City, two of the teams that acquired him in those trades late last year. He most recently played for Portland, starting 21 games and averaging 11 points for the Trail Blazers last season.

"He's a guy that we've really respected and liked and thought that he would be a great fit in our organization and our culture and the way we play for several years," Spoelstra said. "It hasn't worked out that way and that's because a lot of people have felt that way about him around the league."

For his career, during which he has now been traded 11 times, Ariza has averaged 10.5 points, 4.8 rebounds and 1.5 steals. He has been going through coronavirus testing and may be able to play in the coming days.

The 6-foot-8 Ariza is considered a strong defender, and has made 36% of his 3-point tries in the last three seasons. He didn't play with the Trail Blazers in the NBA's restart bubble at Walt Disney World last summer for family reasons.

Tokyo Olympics: yet another scandal over sexist comments

TOKYO (AP)—In yet another setback from the postponed Tokyo Olympics—and another involving comments about women—games' creative director Hiroshi Sasaki resigned on Thursday after making demeaning comments about a well-known female celebrity in Japan.

The Tokyo Olympics are scheduled to open in just over four months, dogged by the coronavirus pandemic, record costs, and numerous scandals. And all of this converges as the Olympic torch relay starts next week from northeastern Japan, a risky venture with 10,000 runners set to crisscross Japan for four months.

When the International Olympic Committee awarded Japan the games 7 1/2 years ago, Tokyo billed itself as "a safe pair of hands." It has evolved into anything but that.

The Japanese did well with initial planning and organization. But they have been buffeted by the pandemic and seem snake-bitten with the Olympics causing new problems and more expenses almost daily. Support has plummeted with various polls suggesting about 80% of Japanese want the Olympics canceled or postponed again. They cite the costs and the risks of holding the mega-event during a pandemic.

"The IOC and Japanese politics are male-dominated territories," Dr. Barbara Holthus, deputy director of the German Institute for Japanese Studies in Tokyo, told The Associated Press. "Japanese politicians have a long history of furthering gender inequalities—besides many other inequalities."

In February, the president of the organizing committee Yoshiro Mori was forced to resign after making sexist comments, saying women talk too much in meetings.

Two years ago, the head of the Japanese Olympic Committee Tsunekazu Takeda was also forced to step dow n in a bribery scandal connected to vote-buying involving IOC members.

Sasaki was in charge of the opening and closing ceremonies for the Olympics, which are scheduled to begin on July 23. He also designed the Tokyo handover ceremony at the 2016 Olympics in Rio de Janeiro, and arranged a one-year-to-go event in July at Tokyo's new National Stadium.

Last year he suggested to planning staff members in online "brainstorming exchanges" that well-known entertainer Naomi Watanabe could perform in the ceremony as an "Olympig."

Watanabe is a heavy-set young woman, a fashion icon, and very famous in Japan. Sasaki's "Olympig" reference was an obvious play on the word "Olympic."

Seiko Hashimoto, president of the Tokyo 2020 Organizing Committee of the Olympic and Paralympic Games, speaks during a press conference regarding its creative director's comments about a well-known female celebrity, in Tokyo Thursday, March 18, 2021. AP

The story was first reported by the weekly magazine Bunshun, and the corresponding controversy took off almost instantly.

Tokyo Governor Yuriko Koike called Sasaki's comments "extremely embarrassing,"

"When we are talking about what we deliver from Tokyo, or from Japan, we shouldn't be sending a negative message," Koike said Thursday.

Sasaki released a statement early on Thursday saying he was stepping down. He said he had also called Seiko Hashimoto, the president of the organizing committee, and tendered his resignation.

"For Ms. Naomi Watanabe, my idea and comments are a big insult. And it is unforgivable," Sasaki said. "I offer my deepest regrets and apologize from the depth of my heart to her, and those who may have been offended by this."

"It is truly regrettable, and I apologize from the bottom of my heart," he added.

Hashimoto said in a Thursday news conference that she had accepted his resignation. She said a replacement would come quickly, and also indicated she had tried to persuade him to stay.

"I did feel that way but he explained, and his intention was very strong," Hashimoto said. "That is how I felt. For those reasons I decided to accept his resignation."

Hashimoto also said she talked with IOC member John Coates, who oversees preparations for Tokyo.

"The IOC also received the (magazine) article and they were quite concerned," Hashimoto said.

Hashimoto, who has appeared in seven Olympics and won a bronze medal in 1992, took over a month ago when Mori made similar sexist comments and was forced out. Hashimoto has acted quickly and appointed 12 women to the organizing committee's executive board, increasing female membership to 42%. It had been 20%.

Sasaki formerly worked for the giant Japanese advertising company Dentsu Inc., which has been a key supporter of these Olympics. It is the official marketing partner and has helped to raise a record of $3.5 billion in local sponsorship, almost three times as much as any previous Olympics.

The torch relay for the Olympics kicks off next week from northeastern Japan and will be a severe test with 10,000 runners crisscrossing Japan for four months, heading to the opening ceremony and trying to avoid spreading COVID-19. Japan has controlled the virus better than most countries and has attributed about 8,700 deaths to the virus.

Organizers and the IOC insist the Olympics will go forward during the pandemic with 11,000 Olympic and 4,400 Paralympic athletes entering Japan. Official costs for Tokyo are $15.4 billion but several government audits show the real cost might be twice that much.

A University of Oxford study says Tokyo is the most expensive Olympics on record.

Shaq Barrett, Buccaneers finalize 4-year, $72M deal

TAMPA, Fla. (AP)—Shaquil Barrett, Lavonte David, Chris Godwin and Rob Gronkowski are all staying with the Tampa Bay Buccaneers, who already feel like big winners in free agency.

The team's top priority this offseason is to keep as much of its Super Bowl championship roster together as possible. General manager Jason Licht made significant progress toward that goal even before the NFL's annual spring spending spree officially began Wednesday. Barrett finalized a four-year, $72 million deal that includes $36 million guaranteed.

Barrett, one of the league's top pass rushers over the past two seasons, said he never seriously considered the prospect of leaving.

"I was always focused on being back here. There was nowhere else I wanted to be," Barrett said.

"I'm happy we were able to get it done at a fair rate for us and (the Bucs)," the 28-year-old linebacker added. "We had a great team. There's no reason to not want to try to bring it back and try to do it again."

Licht paved the way for a long-term deal with Barrett, who earned $15.8 million while playing under the franchise tag. First Licht ensured wide receiver Godwin would be back by applying the 2021 franchise tag. Then David return with a new deal as the GM negotiated a contract extension with Tom Brady to free about $19 million under the salary cap.

Re-signing tight end Gronkowski to a one-year, $10 million deal was the next piece of the puzzle to fall into place, leaving receiver Antonio Brown, running back Leonard Fournette, defensive lineman Ndamukong Suh and kicker Ryan Succop as key players who can also field offers from other teams.

"We've got all the making to do it again. We just have to put the work in again, not rest, and just keep being hungry," said Barrett, who lauded Licht's effort to keep as much of the roster together as possible.

"I applaud every move he's been making. From Day 1 since we've been here, he's been doing it the right way," added Barrett, who signed with Tampa Bay as a free agent in 2019 after spending the first five years of his career with the Denver Broncos.

"Usually teams win and let people go because people usually will demand a higher salary than teams are willing to pay. But we made it work. We moved some stuff around, made some amazing deals with other guys who were free. There's no reason we shouldn't be able to get it done."

Primarily a backup in Denver, Barrett has flourished as a starter with the Bucs. He led the NFL with 19½ sacks in 2019, then had eight more in 2020 before leading an impressive playoff run with three in the NFC championship game and one in the Super Bowl.

"Shaq has made a profound and immediate impact on our defense from the day he stepped into the building two years ago," Licht said. "From leading the league in sacks in 2019 to leaving his mark during our postseason run ... Shaq's contributions have been vital to our success as a team, and we look forward to continuing that success in the years ahead."

Godwin will make $16.43 million next season. David signed a two-year, $25 million salary-cap-friendly deal rather than test free agency after nine seasons in Tampa Bay.

Source: Vikings agree to deal with Patrick Peterson

MINNEAPOLIS (AP)—The Minnesota Vikings agreed to a one-year contract worth up to $10 million with eight-time Pro Bowl cornerback Patrick Peterson on Wednesday night, according to a person with knowledge of the negotiations.

The person spoke to The Associated Press on condition of anonymity because the team had yet to announce the deal. He'll get an $8 million base salary, with up to $2 million in incentives for playing time and being named All-Pro.

Peterson, a three-time All-Pro pick, played 10 seasons with the Arizona Cardinals after being drafted fifth overall out of LSU in 2011. He has never missed a game due to injury. His only career absences came in 2019, due to a six-game suspension by the NFL for violating the league's performance-enhancing drug policy. Peterson had three of his 28 career interceptions in 2020.

Though he's past his prime at age 30, Peterson will bring some badly needed experience to a cornerback group that went through significant growing and injury pains last year. The top two players at the position are Cameron Dantzler and Jeff Gladney, both rookies in 2020 who while showing some promise were picked on often. Mike Hughes, the first-round draft pick in 2018, has had three straight injury-limited seasons. At age 23, Hughes was the longest-tenured cornerback on the team last year.

Peterson ought to be a good fit with coach Mike Zimmer, who still calls the defense on gamedays and takes a significant role in cornerback development despite being in charge of the team. Zimmer valued the experience and leadership of veteran cornerbacks in the past like Terence Newman and Xavier Rhodes, but there was no one in the room last season to be the mentor.

As the NFL market officially opened Wednesday, the Vikings confirmed their contracts with free agents defensive tackle Dalvin Tomlinson and backup linebacker Nick Vigil. They also agreed to terms to bring back offensive tackle Rashod Hill, who will compete for a starting spot after the release of Riley Reiff, and wide receiver Chad Beebe for depth.

Tomlinson was the most significant addition on a two-year deal worth up to $22 million, after playing his first four seasons with the New York Giants. The Vikings need some better run-stoppers, after their defense fell apart in 2020 and Zimmer said late in the year it was the worst one he's ever had in his career.

Vigil played last season with the Los Angeles Chargers, after four years with the Cincinnati Bengals. He has played in 69 career games with 39 starts, including all 16 games for the Bengals in 2019 when he posted a personal-best 111 tackles.

To make room under their salary cap for these deals, the Vikings had to release Reiff, tight end Kyle Rudolph, kicker Dan Bailey and defensive tackle Shamar Stephen. They reworked their contracts with punter Britton Colquitt and linebacker Anthony Barr for additional space.

McDonald's offers $5K hole-in-one prize

In its ongoing efforts to further higher education in the CNMI, McDonald's is offering a $5,000 hole-in-one prize for the upcoming 16th Annual Northern Marianas College Foundation Open Golf Tournament currently scheduled for Saturday, March 20, 2021. The first lucky golfer who makes a hole-in-one at the LaoLao Bay Golf and Resort's hole No. 4 at the east course will win the $5,000 prize.

"We are going through hard economic times, but education is always number one for us," said Mable Ayuyu-Glenn, executive assistant to the president of McDonald's of Saipan.

"We will not stop or cut funds when it comes to education. We are still here for education, no matter what."

Originally scheduled to happen in 2019, the tournament was canceled because of the impact of Super Typhoon Yutu and was rescheduled for March of 2020. However, the COVID-19 pandemic caused the tournament to be postponed again.

"McDonald's has been a great supporter of Northern Marianas College for many, many years," NMC interim president Frankie Eliptico said. "We are grateful for the company's contribution to this year's tournament."

Meanwhile, Marianas Pacific Distributors recently donated $3,575 in cash, in-kind prizes, and beverages to NMC for this Saturday's NMC Foundation Golf Tournament.

"We are proud to be able to support Northern Marianas College and its efforts to support higher education," said Guy Pudney, resident manager of MARPAC. "I encourage other companies to support the College as well."

"Having MARPAC as a sponsor has always boosted the excitement of the event," said Eliptico. "We are grateful for the company's continued support."

The NMC Foundation 16th annual open golf tournament will be held on the east course of the Saipan LaoLao Bay Golf & Resort. Showtime is at 6am, and the shotgun start will be at 7am. The tournament will follow a medal play format. COVID-19 preventative measures will be followed and enforced at the tournament grounds.

First place winners in the men's Championship, A, B, C, Senior, and Ladies Flights will each receive $500, while $300 and $200 will go to the second and third place finishers, respectively. Hole-in-one prizes also include a $5,000 hole-in-one prize from Pacifica Insurance, a 2020 Kia Soul from Joeten Motors, and a 2020 Mazda 3 from Triple J Motors. The tournament will also feature many other items such as raffle prizes like smartphones, hotel stays, meals, and much more.

The maximum number of golf players has been reached, therefore, registration is closed for this year's tournament. Interested players can still apply to be on the waitlist by emailing NMC Foundation coordinator Carla Sablan at carla.sablan@marianas.edu.

The college is asking companies, organizations, or individuals who are interested in sponsoring holes and/or for any in-kind or cash donation to help support the CNMI's post-secondary institution. For more information on how to become a sponsor, call 237-6780. ***(PR)***

NMC

McDonald's of Saipan is offering a $5,000 hole-in-one prize that will be featured at the upcoming annual NMC Foundation Golf Tournament on Saturday, March 20, 2021. In this pre-pandemic photo are McDonald's executive assistant to the president, Mable Ayuyu-Glenn, center; Northern Marianas College interim president Frankie Eliptico; Rutzel Perez, acting general manager of McDonald's Garapan; Jocelyn Asistores, general manager of McDonald's Middle Road; and NMC students.

» MarPac donates $3.5K to NMC

NMC

Marianas Pacific Distributors (MARPAC) donated $3,575 in cash, in-kind prizes, and beverages to Northern Marianas College. The donation will be used for the NMC Foundation's upcoming golf tournament on Saturday, March 20, 2021.

TRIBUNE SPORTS SCORES

NMIFA M-LEAGUE STANDINGS

DIVISION A

RANK	CLUB	GP	W	D	L	GF	GA	GD	PTS
1	PAIRE FC	3	3	0	0	13	0	13	9
2	THFC	3	3	0	0	13	3	10	9
3	NMI U18 A	3	2	1	0	8	0	8	7
4	MP UNITED	3	2	0	1	7	4	3	6
5	KANOA	3	0	1	2	4	4	0	3
6	NMI U18 B	3	0	1	2	3	8	(5)	1
7	OLD B BANK	3	0	0	3	0	14	(14)	0
8	THE ONE FC	3	0	0	3	1	16	(15)	0

DIVISION B

1	SAIPAN UNITED	3	3	0	0	6	1	5	9
2	BANGLADESH FC	3	2	1	0	13	4	9	7
3	SHIRLEY'S FC	3	2	0	1	9	4	5	6
4	MATANSA FC	3	1	1	1	13	13	0	4
5	WNT	3	0	0	3	2	10	(8)	0
6	ISLAND STAR	3	0	0	3	4	15	(11)	0

NBA STANDINGS

EASTERN CONFERENCE	W	L	Pct	GB
Philadelphia	28	13	.683	—
Brooklyn	28	13	.683	—
Milwaukee	26	14	.650	1½
Miami	22	19	.537	6
Charlotte	20	19	.513	7
Atlanta	20	20	.500	7½
Boston	20	20	.500	7½
New York	20	21	.488	8
Chicago	18	21	.462	9
Indiana	17	22	.436	10
Toronto	17	23	.425	10½
Cleveland	15	25	.375	12½
Washington	14	25	.359	13
Orlando	13	26	.333	14
Detroit	11	29	.275	16½

WESTERN CONFERENCE	W	L	Pct	GB
Utah	29	10	.744	—
Phoenix	26	12	.684	2½
L.A. Lakers	27	13	.675	2½
L.A. Clippers	26	16	.619	4½
Denver	24	16	.600	5½
Portland	23	16	.590	6
San Antonio	21	16	.568	7
Dallas	21	18	.538	8
Golden State	21	20	.512	9
Memphis	18	19	.486	10
New Orleans	17	23	.425	12½
Oklahoma City	17	23	.425	12½
Sacramento	16	24	.400	13½
Houston	11	28	.282	18
Minnesota	9	31	.225	20½

BY THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

PADYAKAN

From Page 24

zai Cliff to Seafix and is open to all groups interested.

The Emon Masonic Lodge will award the Top 3 winners with medals and other prizes during the awards ceremony after the race at Banzai Cliff.

PAIRE

From Page 24

TanHoldings 6, The One 1

Tan Holdings currently holds the second spot in Division A after hammering The One from start to finish in their caging last Sunday.

Mark Esalan led the way with his three goals with help from Mareko Tekopua who contributed two goals. Ronnel Ocanada and Michiteru Mita each added a goal.

DIVISION B
Bangladesh FC 5, Island Star 0

Bangladesh FC's Shukqur Ali and Soheal Akanda led the way to victory after making two goals apiece with help from Mohammad Ariful Islam, Rassel, and Titu Ahmed who added one goal each.

Shirley's 6, Matansa 3

Shirley's nipped Matansa behind Guang Zhi Jin who made the three defining goals of the match.

Matansa and Shirley's were left in a tie in the 67th minute before Jin hammered them in the last 13 minutes.

Shirley's took the lead in the first 40 minutes behind Lalaine Pagarao who scored two goals and HoJin Woo who contributed one.

Matansa bit back in the next 20 minutes of the match behind Rakib Hassan who made two goals and Gabriel Jr. Arkoh who scored one.

Antetokounmpo, Bucks outlast 76ers, 109-105, in OT

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Sports

Tokyo Olympics: yet another scandal over sexist comments

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Paire, Saipan United remain unbeaten

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO
Saipan United's Munkhbayar Tsogtbataar intercepts the ball from Women's National Team's Kaithlyn Chavez during their match last Sunday in Division B of the 2021 Spring M-League held at the NMI Soccer Training Center.

By KIMBERLY A. BAUTISTA
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REPORTER

Paire Football Club and Saipan United remain the teams to beat in their respective divisions of the 2021 Spring M-League held at the NMI Soccer Training Cente in Koblerville.

Paire and Saipan United continued with their win streaks after conquering their foes in their respective matches last weekend to maintain their No. 1 spot in the overall standings.

Paire maintained their top spot in Division A after taking a default win against MP United, 3-0, after the latter forfeited the match.

Saipan United took a contrasting win last Thursday edging out the Women's National Team, 2-1, in their match in Division B.

Saipan United took the lead in the 15th minute behind Kenneth Guo who made the first goal of the match. Saixian Bagsic followed suit in the 44th minute with another goal.

In an effort to catch up, the Women's National Team's Gabi Race took scored a goal in the 78th minute but it was too late.

DIVISION A
NMI U18 A 0, NMI U18 B 0

The match between the sister teams ended in a 0-0 draw last Friday. The match was the first draw for NMI U18 A who still remain unbeaten with two wins under its belt. The team holds the No. 3 spot in the season's overall standings.

Kanoa 4, Old B Bank 0

Kanoa bagged its first win of the season against Old B Bank last Sunday. John Guiller Canape took the lead for Kanoa in the first 20 minutes, scoring his first goal in the 9th minute followed by another in the 19th.

Kanoa's Ruselle Zapanta continued to hound Old B Bank after making a goal in the 52nd minute with help from Christian Buno who scored the last goal in the 77th minute.

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TRAC now associate member of ITU

By KIMBERLY A. BAUTISTA
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REPORTER

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO
Manny Sitchon addresses members of the Triathlon Association of the CNMI as the organization's new president during their meeting last Saturday in the Northern Marianas Sports Association office at the Francisco C. Ada Gymnasium.

The Triathlon Association of the CNMI has officially been recognized by the International Triathlon Union as an associate member of the Oceania Triathlon Union.

According to TRAC president Manny Sitchon, this means the Triathlon Association of the CNMI will be getting more support from Oceania.

"Before, we didn't have much access [to aid] from [Oceania] because we are not yet recognized as a member of Oceania Federation. Now, although we aren't a full member of Oceania, we are now an associate member. The CNMI has long been pushing to become a part of Oceania Federation," he said.

Sitchon said this entails that the sport of triathlon in the CNMI will gain a lot more support including educational support, financial support, and more.

During a World Triathlon Congress virtual meeting back in November 2020, the Northern Mariana Islands was officially approved as an associate member of the International Triathlon Union.

The membership is a big boost to the triathlon group and they will be using their membership to prepare for the CNMI's hosting of the 2022 Pacific Mini Games, Sitchon said.

TRAC was granted membership after waiting for nearly three years. TRAC applied to become part of the union but they were denied because a provision in the ITU constitution that was added back in 1995 established that only member countries recognized by the International Olympic Committee or United Nations could become a full member.

However, back in 2018, the ITU Congress amended the constitution to allow territories to become members too.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO
Cyclists had to ride to Banzai Cliff the last couple of weekends to register for the 2021 Padyakan Sa Saipan cycling event hosted by the Emon Masonic Lodge No. 179. The event has been postponed to April 18 due to ongoing COVID-19 concerns.

Padyakan Sa Saipan '21 postponed

By KIMBERLY A. BAUTISTA
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REPORTER

Emon Masonic Lodge No. 179 has decided to postpone the 2021 Padyakan Sa Saipan cycling event that was scheduled for this Sunday, March 20, as a result of the current community cluster of COVID-19 positive cases in the CNMI.

According to Danny Bañez, event coordinator, he proposed the postponement, that was unanimously agreed upon by organizing committee members, because of the risk local transmissions posed to the community.

He said the priority is the safety of not just the participants but also the entire community and he felt it would be safer to push the event back until the community transmission clears up.

Bañez said the event will be pushed back to April 18, a month from the original date, to give the Governor's COVID-19 Task Force ample time to control the spread of the virus.

Registration for the event will also continue until April 18 or until all the slots have been filled.

To date, the event has attracted a total of 49 registrants and will continue to accept registrations until the day before the event.

The registration fee of $50 includes a cycling jersey and a ticket to the dinner banquet. Interested cyclists may sign up online at www.strava.com/clubs/699161. Kit packets will also be available at the Rendezvous Restaurant located on the second floor of Saipan Vegas along Middle Road.

The event will feature a 20-kilometer course and a 60-kilometer course. Age categories include 19-and-under, 20-29, 30-39, 40-49, 50-59, 60-and-up, and open.

The 20-km course stretches from Banzai Cliff to Seafix and is geared toward beginners and are strictly

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